East Whiteland Township
CHESTER COUNTY, PA

Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan
a chapter of the Comprehensive Plan

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acknowledgements

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INTRODUCTION

East Whiteland Township has developed this Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan to enhance the quality of life in our community through the conservation of our scenic beauty and natural, cultural and historic resources, and improved maintenance and development of our parks, and recreation facilities. We began preparing this plan in 2019, at a time when parks, recreation, trail development and open space conservation were facing typical challenges – shortages in funding, limited opportunities to acquire land, competing needs of development and maintenance, growing demand for active and passive recreation facilities, sometimes in opposition to each other, and a shift in the types of necessary facilities, as Pennsylvania’s population ages. Additionally, East Whiteland faces a unique challenge as much of the land which may be available requires some form of environmental remediation. The plan has been prepared to address these issues.

East Whiteland Township’s parks, recreation facilities and programs, open spaces and trails already provide residents with a good mix of active and passive recreation opportunities, athletic fields and natural areas, and places to sit and relax or work up a sweat. The recommendations in this plan will help the Township better grow the recreation system while efficiently managing and financing maintenance and capital projects. With continued leadership, volunteerism, and dedication, this already very good park system can become a great park system!

PURPOSE

In Chester County, municipalities are required to update their comprehensive plans every ten years. This plan serves as an update to the Township Park and Recreation Plan of 2003 and will act as a chapter of the East Whiteland Township Comprehensive Plan. In addition to the recommendations of the Comprehensive Plan, this plan also seeks to support, strengthen, and reiterate recommendations contained in other Township plans, including the Route 30 Corridor Plan and the Patriot’s Path plan. The Chester County Planning Commission also offers county-wide recommendations regarding open space, trails, parks and recreation in documents such as Landscapes3 and the Multi-Modal Handbook.
for Chester County, PA. This plan aims to pursue the goals and follow the recommendations contained in those plans, while specifically serving the needs of the residents.

East Whiteland has shown the ability to successfully pursue grant funding for planning and implementation. The township has recently received funding through Chester County and PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. This plan will keep East Whiteland in position to remain competitive for funding for parks, recreation, trails and open space from local and state government as well as private foundations. The plan serves as a guide and is not a law. East Whiteland Township will continue to involve the public and work in collaboration with community partners in the public and private sectors in implementing the plan.

**PROCESS**

East Whiteland Township contracted with Natural Lands, Toole Recreation Planning, McMahon Associates and Gaito & Associates to develop the plan in collaboration with the community. The consultants worked closely with a citizen task force, made up of volunteers. Two members of the task force also served on the Township Parks and Recreation Board and acted as liaisons. One member of the Board of Supervisors also participated in the Task Force meetings as a liaison to the Board.

The Task Force and consultants worked together to review existing data, including GIS maps, local, regional and county wide plans. The consultants also visited each of the Township’s parks, trails and open spaces to analyze the existing conditions. The Task Force articulated the perceived needs and wants of the community, helping to inform the consultants of the current situation in the Township.

The consultants and Task Force worked with residents to inform decision making about goals and objectives of the plan.

In addition to working with the Task Force, the consultants also solicited public input, through public meetings, facilitated public workshops, and key person interviews. The information...
gathered from the public was used to verify the findings and recommendations of the Task Force and became the basis for creation of the goals set forth in the plan.

**GOALS**

Based on the consultants’ field work and findings, recommendations from the Task Force and information provided by the public regarding the community’s needs and wants, we identified an overall goal for the plan:

*Develop an action plan to enhance the quality of life in East Whiteland Township through Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails over the next 10 years.*

The plan contains seven distinct chapters, each based on one major topic or element of the plan. The overall goal and the chapter specific goals are rooted in the core values held by the community, including: **Accessibility and Equity; Pride in Clean Water; Maintenance Standards; Connections; Neighbors; and Conservation.** These are explained in greater detail in Chapter 2. The chapter specific goals are as follows:

- **Open Space**: Conserve **Open Space** through fee simple acquisition or conservation easements, to protect natural resources and provide opportunities to connect with nature.

- **Parks and Recreation Facilities**: Establish the **Parks and Recreation Facilities** as accessible community destinations, where residents of all ages and abilities can socialize, connect with nature and have fun!
**Trail System:** Connect the community with a system of Trails to encourage walking, bicycling and running and to provide opportunities for recreation and transportation.

**Land Use:** Improve and utilize Land Use Regulations to conserve open space, preserve important natural resources, and provide recreation opportunities within the community.

**Programs and Services:** Develop, expand, and continue to offer Programs and Services which strengthen the community and allow residents to connect with nature, and engage in active, healthy lifestyles.

**Organization:** Build on the strengths of the Township’s Parks and Recreation Board, administration, elected officials and citizens, to establish an Organizational Configuration that best serves the Township’s Parks and Recreation needs.

**Finances:** Continue to seek additional funds through county, state and federal grants, and further diversify sources of Financial Support in order to continue improving parks and recreation while easing the burden on the Township budget.

Each of these chapter specific goals will be achieved by meeting the objectives described in Chapter 2 of this plan.

**IMPLEMENTATION: MOVING FORWARD**

While it might appear that the job is complete because the plan is written, the work has only begun. Implementing the East Whiteland Township Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan will be an ongoing process of planning, doing, assessing effectiveness, and beginning the process anew over the next ten years. To implement the Plan, an operational program is needed. An operational program will describe the specific actions that will be taken to accomplish each objective identified in the Plan. The operational program will identify timelines, responsible parties, resource allocations and sources, and an evaluation plan that will identify specific outcomes to be achieved. The Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan focuses on the what. The operational plan focuses on the how. The operational plan should focus on the first year of implementation. It may include only a few things. The key is that they must be practical, achievable and likely to achieve successful completion. It is better to do a few things well to build a track record of success and momentum. The final chapter of this plan will include recommended action items, potentially responsible parties and resources and a rough timeframe loosely reflecting priority. The Township should consider preparing more detailed schedules, lists of resources, outcomes and measures of evaluation.

- **Action Items** – Identify the specific tasks that should be done to achieve the identified objective.
- **Responsible Parties** – Designate who will be responsible and accountable for accomplishing each task. Be specific.
- **Schedule** – Create the exact dates and duration for accomplishment of the task. Set milestones for important accomplishments by specific date.
- **Resource Requirements and Sources** – List all of the funds, materials, equipment, facilities, and so on required to accomplish
the task. Provide the source of these resources including East Whiteland Township, partners, sponsors, fees, charges or others.

- **Outcomes** – Specify the anticipated results to be achieved by the designated timeline.

- **Evaluation Measures** – Establish indicators to show if the effort has been successful.

**ENSURING SUCCESS**

Keep this Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan before key stakeholders. This plan should be out and used regularly. All outcomes should refer to plan implementation. It is easy to get distracted in routine activities, but the Plan needs to be in use in all Township planning and decision-making. Boards such as the Supervisors, Township Administration, Parks and Recreation Board, Environmental Advisory Council and the Planning Commission all need to have the Plan and refer to it regularly. This plan should be printed, with a copy marked as to be kept in the public meeting room, so that boards and commissions can easily find it and use it for reference.

As an adopted plan, it serves as a guide; it is not carved in stone. It is intended to seize opportunities and meet emerging needs as circumstances warrant. The process of implementing the plan is ongoing and continuous, not a one time event, as set forth in the operational plan.

East Whiteland Township should move ahead with the plan as adopted and be prepared to adjust strategies as necessary in response to

*In 2020, Coronavirus forced the closure of parks, playgrounds, and other facilities across the state, reminding us of the value of a diverse and flexible parks and recreation system.*
local, national and global events, crises and movements. Flexibility, patience, and adaptability will be essential in creating the parks and recreation system that suits a community the caliber of East Whiteland Township. With a tangible plan and a sound implementation process in place, the Township is likely to protect its scenic beauty and enhance the parks, recreation, and open space system that is already recognized as an important community asset.
1. CONTEXT AND INVENTORY

CONTEXT

East Whiteland is situated in northeastern Chester County and is surrounded by Charlestown Township to the North, Tredyffrin Township to the east, Malvern Borough, and Willistown and East Goshen Townships to the south and West Whiteland Township to the west. This area is already more developed than most of the County and Chester County’s Landscapes 3 calls for even more growth in the future. East Whiteland has the greatest density of employers in the county as well as access to passenger rail, and water and sewer infrastructure. East Whiteland township also features a great variety of parks and recreational facilities.

The Township contains significant natural resources intertwined with suburban development. The Township is part of the Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area. National Heritage Areas are places where historic, cultural and natural resources combine to form cohesive, nationally important, landscapes that we live in. In 2000, the U.S. Congress designated the area as the Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area because of the nationwide significance it played in the American, Industrial and Environmental Revolutions as well as for its diverse and unique natural and recreational resources. The Schuylkill River Greenways National Heritage Area stretches from Pottsville to Philadelphia. Valley Creek runs through East Whiteland Township and is a tributary to the Schuylkill River.

East Whiteland has predominantly grown in a typical suburban pattern. The Township grew greatly between 1950 and 2000, with more than 3,500 homes built during this time. Over these 60 years, an average of 580 homes were built each decade. The 2013-2017 American Community Survey Census estimates state that 60% of the housing units in the township are single family detached dwelling units. The remaining 40% is comprised of multi-unit development. There are also more than 100 mobile homes in the community.

Commercial and institutional uses line the major township roads. Several state highways including Routes 202, 30 and 401 cross the Township. The Pennsylvania Turnpike (Rt 276) runs north of the municipality. County Route 29 provides a north/south route at the eastern side of the Township. Route 352 crosses the Township, south of Route 30. Bus routes 92, 204, 205 and 206 serve the eastern and southern portions of the Township. The Malvern station is south of the Township and provides rail access along the Paoli/Thorndale Line. Amtrak and Norfolk Southern also operate rail lines which cross the township east to
This web of highways and railroads physically divides the township, making it harder to get around by car, on foot or bicycle.

The Chester Valley Trail crosses the Township as well, following the old Pennsylvania Railroad line. The trail is owned and maintained by Chester County. It connects to many neighborhoods, parks and the Township building. It offers residents a safe place to walk or bicycle within the Township, or to explore beyond East Whiteland's borders.

MUNICIPAL PROPERTIES

East Whiteland Township owns approximately 200 acres of land, spread across twenty-two properties. These include ten parks with public access, one historic site and one open space with limited public access, and eight properties which contain basins, spray fields or other remnants of subdivisions which do not permit public access. Approximately 100 acres are spread across the ten parks, which range in size from the 32-acre Valley Creek Park, down to the tiny Bryn Erin playlots. The parks provide residents with access to active and passive recreation, including sports facilities, nature trails and playgrounds. The Gunkel Spring Mill, a historic site, preserves the township’s past, while inviting residents to enjoy the preserved building and surroundings. Many of the Township’s parks are along the Chester Valley Trail, which offers opportunities to connect more residents to the parks. But the highways and railroads have isolated some residents and entire neighborhoods from the Township parks.

The remaining township owned lands are primarily small parcels, some containing basins, often tucked away in the corner of a subdivision. But there are a few exceptions. The Malvern Hunt spray fields occupy 61 acres of woodlands in the northwest corner of the Township. East Whiteland also owns nearly 7 acres adjacent to Route 202 near Ecology Park, sometimes referred to as the former Rubino tract. These parcels don’t contribute to recreation the way parks do, but they preserve natural resources and perform important functions such as stormwater management.

NEIGHBORING PARKS

The municipalities surrounding East Whiteland are also rich with parks and recreational facilities. These neighboring parks can provide for residents who live in the gaps between parks, or who want to find a facility which East Whiteland’s parks may not have. They may also provide opportunities for connections and partnerships. However, East Whiteland should not depend on these parks for the long term as they don’t have any role in how these parks are maintained, planned or operated. A neighboring municipality may decide to restrict their parks use to their residents only. They can remove features or amenities as they desire. For these reasons, East Whiteland Township should consider that their residents are using parks in neighboring municipalities but should not depend on them or assume that their residents will have continued access to them.

Charlestown Township, to the north of East Whiteland, only has two parks, with a third being planned. Brightside Farm Park is a preserved farm of 75 acres, featuring walking trails and a community garden. The park is just north of the PA turnpike, close enough for East Whiteland residents to visit. Charlestown Township Park features walking trails, pavilions and

Natural resources like Valley Creek provide recreation opportunities, like fishing, within the parks.
ports fields. This park is close to Phoenixville, about a 15-minute drive from the East Whiteland Township building. The distance and selection of facilities make it unlikely that East Whiteland residents use this park frequently.

Tredyffrin Township, to the east, features twelve parks and five township open space parcels. Cedar Hollow Park is the closest to East Whiteland. This park features baseball and softball fields, soccer fields, a picnic area, and sand volleyball courts. The park is not close to the residential areas of East Whiteland, making it unlikely that residents would seek this park out, unless they want to use the sand volleyball courts. However, the Chester Valley Trail currently skirts the edge of the park and the Warner Spur trail is planned to intersect the CVT within this park, which would make it a hub for trail users in the future.

Open Land Conservancy also owns nature preserves within Tredyffrin Township. These include the George Lorimer, Cool Valley, Cedar Hollow, Miller and Valley Creek preserves. These preserves contain stretches of Valley Creek, its tributaries and watershed. They form a greenway which begins in East Whiteland’s Valley Creek Park. East Whiteland residents likely visit these preserves for walks in the woods and meadows, or to fish for trout in Valley Creek.

Malvern Borough, south of East Whiteland, has four municipal parks containing only 3 acres and one open space of approximately 40 acres. Malvern Borough is an easy drive from most of East Whiteland Township. It is somewhat walkable from the southern portions of the township and will become better connected at the completion of the Patriots Path project. Recommendations for more bicycle and pedestrian connections in this plan would also make Malvern and its parks more accessible to East Whiteland residents. The Borough’s parks provide for a mix of active and passive recreation with features including basketball courts, baseball fields, and volleyball courts. The Paoli Battleground Memorial Park offers history and education. The parks also host concerts, festivals and other events. Due to Malvern’s compact and walkable scale combined with its shops, services and restaurants, East Whiteland residents visit the borough frequently. They likely use Malvern’s parks as freely and frequently as if they belonged to East Whiteland.

Willistown Township surrounds Malvern, also to the south of East Whiteland. Greentree Park is the closest to East Whiteland. It contains a basketball court, gazebo, picnic tables, a playground, restrooms and sports fields. This seven-acre park lies in a walkable section of Willistown Township, which basically functions as an extension of Malvern Borough. East Whiteland residents likely visit the park to attend concerts, festivals and other events there. Okehocking Preserve is also within the southern portion of Willistown Township, along Route 3. This 180-acre nature preserve features miles of trails which wind through scenic meadows and woodlands and along the Ridley Creek. Okehocking draws visitors from all the surrounding communities, including East Whiteland.

East Goshen, south of East Whiteland at the western end of the Township, only has two parks – East Goshen Township Park and Applebrook Park. Both parks are on Paoli Pike, approximately one and three quarters miles from the Township line. Township Park is a community park, featuring sports fields and courts, a destination playground, natural areas and gardens. The park also hosts events such as farmers markets, firework shows, and concerts. Applebrook is more of an open space, featuring vast meadows, wetlands and a stretch of Ridley Creek. It also contains a historic building and a system of paved trails for walking. East Whiteland residents attend events and use the playground at Township Park and walk the natural areas at Applebrook.
West Whiteland Township is due west of East Whiteland. It features eleven parks which provide for active and passive recreation. Mill Valley Park is closest to East Whiteland geographically and may be walkable to the southwestern most neighborhoods. However, the park doesn’t likely draw many residents from East Whiteland, as the park contains only a stormwater pond, mowed grass and some benches, all within the middle of a subdivision. However, Exton Park, co-owned by West Whiteland Township and Chester County, is a major draw for residents in all the surrounding communities. The park contains over 700 acres of meadows, agricultural fields, creeks, floodplains, wetlands, a pond and forests. Facilities currently include parking, playgrounds, picnic areas and trails. The Chester Valley Trail runs through this park and connects to its parking area. A new master plan for the park also proposes a dog park, more parking, more playing fields, a sledding hill and nature play areas.

PROTECTED LANDS

Five privately owned parcels in the Township are protected from further development by conservation easements. These properties have been protected in order to preserve natural resources and for their scenic value. The five easements include a total of only seventeen acres combined. None of the properties permit public access. One parcel protects a portion of a tributary to Valley Creek, thereby protecting water quality. However, due to their small size, lack of public access, and lack of connectivity, they provide only minimal benefits to the Township’s system of parks and recreation.

SEMI-PRIVATE LANDS

Many privately owned properties within the Township function as somewhat public spaces. Homeowners and condominium associations own and maintain over 400 acres of land in the Township. Most of this land is considered private and is for the use of the residents of these communities only. Lands associated with office parks and commercial uses is available for workers and visitors. Malvern Hunt holds the largest amount of land at approximately 59 acres. Some of these parcels preserve woodlands, wetlands, and creeks, and manage stormwater. However, they offer minimal benefits to the Township’s system of parks and recreation.
A few office complexes in the Township provide some recreation facilities for their employees. The Cerner Health and St. Gobain office sites each feature a baseball field for employee games. Cerner Health property also contains a nature trail. Many office complexes include open grass areas where employees can enjoy the outdoors.

Immaculata University is privately owned, but many residents walk the driveways and paths around campus. With forests, agricultural fields and a vibrant student population, residents can enjoy the outdoors in a park like setting. However, Immaculata’s lands are not conserved and therefore, the Township should not depend on them for providing recreation. Similarly, two large cemeteries, Haym Solomon Memorial Park and Philadelphia Memorial Park, also permit visitors to walk the grounds. The cemeteries are also unprotected land and could theoretically be developed. They could also restrict access at any time.

HISTORIC RESOURCES

The Township Comprehensive Plan, Map 3, Historic Resources, shows all of the historic resources within the Township, categorized into three classes, as follow:

- **Class 1**: The resource is listed on, contributes to, or is determined eligible for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places.
- **Class 2**: The resource is considered by the municipality to meet the standards to be considered for the National Register of Historic Places and/or is identified as highly significant at a local level.
- **Class 3**: All remaining resources that are 50 years and older.

There appear to be over 100 resources within these three classes spread throughout the Township. According to the Chester County Planning Commission map of National Register Eligible and Listed Historic Resources and Districts, last revised January 2018, there are 10 sites and two districts within the Township. These include farms, houses, taverns, railroad lines and Immaculata University. Only one of the resources shown on either of these maps, the Gunkle Spring Mill, is owned by the Township. The remaining resources are important landmarks which preserve the Township’s historic character but provide little benefit to the township parks and recreation system.

EXISTING TRAILS, PATHS AND SIDEWALKS

East Whiteland Township residents have access to many trails of different types, which offer differing experiences. These trails range from the Chester Valley Trail, a regional, Circuit level, paved trail to the narrow, earthen nature path in Ecology Park. Other parks, like Valley Creek, also provide paved and earthen trails, for short walks along creeks, through fields and around parks. Local paths help to connect neighborhoods to schools and businesses, as is the case at Great Valley High School, where a short path allows residents in the Spring Mill neighborhood to walk through a park and into the school property. The Township has worked to create these connections and trails and continues to plan and construct more.

The Chester Valley Trail provides a strong spine for the township wide trail system, as it crosses the Township east to west, at a distance of about 4.5 miles. The CVT is owned and managed by Chester County. It connects residents to Battle of the Clouds and Down East Parks.
Bacton Hill Park will also connect to the trail once its developed. The trail already connects directly to some neighborhoods, including the Down East neighborhood, Malin Station and Great Valley Crossing. More connections to the CVT are being planned, funded and constructed, including connections to the Bryn Erin and Sidley Road neighborhoods. The Chester Valley Trail allows residents to commute on foot or by bike and lets them run, ride or walk for recreation.

Like many suburbs, most of East Whiteland’s neighborhoods lack sidewalks. With a few exceptions, most of these neighborhoods receive light enough traffic to allow residents to walk in the streets in relative safety. However, due in part to the multitude of highways and railroads, these neighborhoods are isolated, without a means to walk to the nearby parks, businesses or other community hubs. The Township has made great progress in connecting the neighborhoods to the Chester Valley Trail and is also making progress on connecting to other community destinations.

The Township, surrounding municipalities and Chester County have been proactive in planning for trails, as a number of plans offer guidance and recommendations on trail development. The following local and regional plans all include maps or recommendations for trails in East Whiteland:

**East Whiteland Township Plans:**
- Multimodal Transportation Map in Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (2019)
- Great Valley Parkway Multimodal Map (2019)
- Route 30 Corridor Master Plan (2018)
- Comprehensive Plan (2016)
- Route 29/Great Valley Multimodal Study (2014)

**Regional Plans:**
- Warner Spur Multi-Use Trail Master Plan (2019)
- Patriots Path Plan (2014)
- Devault Rail-Trail Feasibility Study (2014)

East Whiteland is implementing the recommendations in many of these plans. This Parks, Recreation and Open Space plan will build on the trail map contained in the Township Comprehensive Plan. The Township is actively working on designing and implementing trails including the Patriots Path, the Bryn Erin connector and the Sidley Road connector.

With the Chester Valley Trail as a spine, the Township has the opportunity to build out an extensive, Township wide trail system. The parks, neighborhoods, schools, businesses and other community hubs can be connected to the trails. This township wide trail network will serve residents, businesses, workers and commuters, providing opportunities for recreation and transportation.

**WOODLANDS**

East Whiteland is not a heavily wooded Township, but there are a few large contiguous woodlands left in the northwestern corner. Wooded corridors also follow streams through public and private land throughout the township.

A wooded corridor remains in the northwest corner of the Township. The corridor includes the 80-acre Springridge tract, which extends into Charlestown Township, and many smaller wooded parcels to the west, which range in size from about an acre up to about five acres. These properties connect to the Malvern Hunt spray field, further to the west. These woodlands are an important resource, as they protect the headwaters of Valley Creek. Valley Creek Park, the adjacent office complex and Ecology Park also contain notable stands of trees, all of which buffer Valley Creek and its tributaries.
Highways, railroads and utilities have also left some remnant woodlands. Long and narrow stretches of woodlands follow the rail lines. Remnant woodlands have been carved out along Route 202. Woodlands buffer the area between Route 30 and the Paoli Thorndale line, including a large area north of Immaculata University. These remaining wooded areas offer some buffering between commercial and housing developments and the rail line. Similarly, wooded areas remain along the Chester Valley Trail, remnants from its history as a rail line. These provide a narrow but fairly continuous canopy, creating shade for the trail.

These woodlands are important as they beautify the township, provide shade for residents, and habitat for native animals. But perhaps most importantly, they protect the headwaters, tributaries and main stems of Valley and Ridley Creeks. These riparian buffers reduce the amount of pollutants and sediment in streams, protect properties from damage due to flooding, and promote stormwater infiltration that improves water quality. A continuous canopy also provides shade to streams, which lowers water temperature thereby improving habitat for fish and amphibians. These factors contribute greatly to the health of the stream systems and the quality of the groundwater.

**HYDROLOGY**

East Whiteland Township is within three watersheds: Valley Creek, Ridley Creek and East Branch Brandywine Creek. Most of the township, approximately 85% is within the Valley Creek watershed. The Ridley Creek watershed encompasses the southwestern corner of the township, including approximately 8% of the township. The East Branch Brandywine Creek watershed covers a sliver of the township that roughly follows the western boundary, including approximately 7% of the Township. All three are locally important streams and watersheds.

Valley Creek runs through the Township north of Route 202 towards Tredyffrin and is a tributary to the Schuylkill River. Valley Creek is a Class A trout fishery that was designated as an Exceptional Value stream in 1993. The main stem of Valley Creek flows near Route 202, in the center of East Whiteland. Many tributaries run from the north and south to the center of the Township. Little Valley Creek originates in the southern portion of the township, between King Road and the railroad tracks, near Duffy’s Cut. It flows north then follows Route 202 east until it meets Valley Creek near the Chesterbook development in Tredyffrin Township.

In its 2016 report, PADEP listed Valley Creek as impaired due to elevated PCB levels in fish tissue, resulting in a fish consumption ban. Valley Creek was previously listed in 1998, along with Little Valley Creek, due to elevated PCB levels in fish tissue. A Total Maximum Daily Load or TMDL plan has been developed to improve the water quality in the Valley and Little Valley Creek basins. The plan prescribes the allowable loading for PCB that will meet the water quality objective.

Ridley Creek is designated as High Quality Waters, Trout Stocking Stream by PADEP. (Learn more about

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1 Section 303(d) of the federal Clean Water Act
the Class A Trout Stocking designation in Appendix D.) The Creek’s headwaters are on the campus of Immaculata University and surrounding properties. Ridley Creek flows southeast through East Goshen and many other municipalities before emptying into the Delaware River at the northern edge of the City of Chester. Ridley Creek supplies drinking water for 40,000 residents in Delaware County. Aqua Pennsylvania treats this water at its Media plant.

The East Branch Brandywine Creek flows out of the Township to the west and south. Only a short stretch of a tributary, also called Valley Creek, is within the Township. This tributary was designated as impaired in 2018. It flows into the main stem of the East Branch Brandywine Creek, which flows through southern Chester County, before joining the West Branch and flowing through Delaware. The Brandywine Creek then flows into the Christina River in Wilmington, near its mouth at the Delaware River.

**WETLANDS, LAKES AND PONDS**

According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s National Wetlands Inventory, wetlands are clustered along Valley Creek near Route 202. Most are associated with the waterways and floodplains. These wetlands are important as they provide habitat for fish and amphibians, provide flood control and help to filter water before it enters the streams.

Lakes and ponds do not naturally occur in southeastern Pennsylvania. So, it is no surprise that very few exist within the Township. The water filled quarry north of the Atwater development, at approximately 45 acres and 1.5 miles around, is the largest water body in the Township. Another filled quarry, behind the Desmond Hotel, contains approximately 20 acres of water surface and has a perimeter of approximately 0.9 miles. Smaller ponds exist throughout the Township as well. These are primarily stormwater management areas or remnant farm ponds. As all of the ponds and lakes are on private property, they do not contribute to the parks and recreation system.

**TOPOGRAPHY**

The nickname “the Great Valley” is an apt description of the topography of East Whiteland Township. Most of the township lies on the floor of the valley, with the ridges which contain the valley roughly following the Township’s northern and southern boundaries. The highest point in the township appears to be near the northwestern corner, where the ridge reaches approximately 670 feet above sea level. The bottom of the active quarry is dug out to only 120 feet above sea level, which appears to be the lowest point in the Township. However, it appears that the lowest naturally occurring point may be around 200 feet above sea level, where the Valley Creek flows into Tredyffrin Township, east of Valley Creek Park. Generally, steep slopes exist along the ridges to the north and south. The valley floor features rolling topography but is relatively flat compared to the ridges.

**SOILS**

The Township contains over 50 different soil types in a patchwork pattern. These soil types include prime farmland, farmland of statewide importance and other soils. The farmland of statewide importance is in patches along roadways and it’s connected by the prime farmland. This pattern is interrupted by urban soils associated with development that has occurred near the roadways. The highest quality soils are located on the western side of the Township. The quarries and development on the eastern side has depleted the high-quality soil in the eastern side of the Township.
2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

A FRAMEWORK FOR DECISION MAKING

This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan is a chapter in the East Whiteland Township Comprehensive Plan, which serves as a guide for decision making. This plan offers guidance on establishing an interconnected system of parks, recreation facilities, trails and open spaces that provides opportunities for passive and active recreation, and conservation of natural resources. This plan suggests strategies and policies to assist the Township in maintaining the parks and facilities they already have, in stewarding land and water, conserving the remaining open spaces, planning for flexible uses and adaptable spaces and ensuring that these resources remain integrated into the community’s way of life.

This plan should serve as a reference for Township officials, administration, commissions, and boards; community organizations, and other interested parties, which may include the Great Valley School District, local clubs and recreation organizations. This plan is a guide for future actions and decisions. Further discussion, public involvement and approvals will be necessary prior to the implementation of any of the recommendations.

PROJECT GOAL

The plan contains many goals related to parks, recreation, and open space. All the goals fall within the overarching project goal:

*Develop an action plan to enhance the quality of life in East Whiteland Township through Parks, Recreation, Open Space, and Trails over the next 10 years.*

Parks and recreation can be a way of life in East Whiteland. The Township has established a solid system of parks, trails and open spaces which can be made even better! Through implementation of the recommendations within this plan, parks, recreation facilities and open spaces will be improved, made more accessible to more of the population and better incorporated into everyday life.

CORE VALUES

Township leadership, administration, the project advisory committee and the public have clearly identified the qualities valued by this community. The following core values should inform future decisions, policies and actions.

*Accessibility and Equity* – Making decisions which improve the lives of all township residents, with an emphasis on making parks...
and recreation accessible to all, regardless of physical ability, age, gender, or race.

**Pride in Clean Water** – Valley Creek holds DEP’s highest designation, as Exceptional Value waters and supports wild trout populations. Ridley Creek holds the second highest designation, as High Quality waters. Few communities as developed as East Whiteland feature water with these important designations!

**Maintenance Standards** – Even as this plan is being written, East Whiteland continues to improve, resurfacing courts, painting backstops, and installing new equipment. Parks and Recreation has set a high standard which the Township should continue to meet.

**Connections** – People love the Chester Valley Trail and want to be able to get to it, and the parks, open spaces, and other community destinations, more easily. People want to be able to get out of their cars and walk or bicycle.

**Neighbors** - The community realizes that parks, recreation, and everyday life don’t stop at the township boundaries. Residents will continue to visit the shops and restaurants in Malvern, the nature preserves in Tredyffrin, and the parks in the other surrounding communities as well.

**Conservation** – The community knows that there aren’t many opportunities left and if they don’t conserve land now, they may miss their last best chances.

**SHAPING THE GOALS**

Community engagement has played a vital role in the development of this plan. The consulting team included a Plan Advisory Committee, made up of five residents, a township supervisor, and staff. The PAC held monthly working meetings and conducted two public meetings which included active participation. The consultant team conducted key person interviews and focus groups. Prior to the start of the project, the Township Parks and Recreation Board also conducted a public survey which gathered information about Bacton Hill Park and the township wide parks and recreation system. These interactions with the public, elected officials, appointed commissions and staff have lead to the creation of the goals and objectives.

**GOALS**

The plan focuses on achieving, in no order, the following goals related to the major topics included in the plan:

**Open Space**: Conserve Open Space through fee simple acquisition or conservation easements, to protect natural resources and provide opportunities to connect with nature.

**Parks and Recreation Facilities**: Establish the Parks and Recreation Facilities as accessible community destinations, where residents of all ages and abilities can socialize, connect with nature and have fun!

**Trail System**: Connect the community with a system of Trails to encourage walking, bicycling and running and to provide
opportunities for recreation and transportation.

**Land Use:** Improve and utilize **Land Use Regulations** to conserve open space, preserve important natural resources, and provide recreation opportunities within the community.

**Programs and Services:** Develop, expand and continue to offer **Programs and Services** which strengthen the community and allow residents to connect with nature, and engage in active, healthy lifestyles.

**Organization:** Build on the strengths of the Township’s Parks and Recreation Board, administration, elected officials and citizens, to establish an **Organizational Configuration** that best serves the Township’s Parks and Recreation needs.

**Finances:** Continue to seek additional funds through county, state and federal grants, and further diversify sources of **Financial Support** in order to continue improving parks and recreation while easing the burden on the Township budget.

**OBJECTIVES**

The seven goals stated above illustrate the big picture outcomes the plan should achieve. However, in order to reach each of the seven goals, the Township must focus on achieving the objectives of each goal, as described below.

**Open Space**

Conserve **Open Space** through fee simple acquisition or conservation easements, to protect natural resources, provide opportunities to connect with nature and offer respite in times of stress.

a. Conserve parcels which will protect or improve water quality in the Exceptional Value (EV) and High Quality (HQ) stream watersheds. Valley Creek is an EV stream, while Ridley Creek holds an HQ designation. These clean water resources are worthy of protection in their own right, but can typically be coupled with restoration, nature trails, fishing piers or other recreation opportunities.

b. Conserve land in the southern (especially southwestern) portion of the Township, where there is currently a lack of parks or open space. These neighborhoods are cut off from the existing parks by multiple sets of railroad tracks and Route 30, with few crossings. The Township must acquire large parcels of land from a single owner, or cobble together multiple, smaller privately owned properties to create a meaningful park or open space for public use.

c. Conserve parcels which are adjacent to existing parks and open spaces to expand opportunities for recreation, increase protection of contiguous natural features or to connect existing parks and open spaces.

*The goals and objectives were informed through a robust public process, including Task Force and Public Meetings.*
to neighborhoods, commercial centers or other important community destinations.

d. Conserve the few remaining undeveloped large parcels for use as parks, open space with trails or natural areas. The Township is largely developed, so very few large parcels remain undeveloped. Some of these have an industrial history and would require remediation.

e. Explore opportunities to acquire, conserve, lease or otherwise make use of lands owned by corporations or office complexes. East Whiteland is well known as the home of many large corporations. Most of their headquarters are on large parcels and consume a great deal of land. However, it appears that some of these parcels are not being used to their fullest potential, either due to building restrictions, incompatible natural resources or other reasons. Some of this land could be suitable for parks, recreation and open space uses.

f. Build relationships between the Open Space Review Board and owners of large properties and make it clear that the Township is interested in conservation. These may include properties which are not obvious opportunities for conservation, including the Great Valley School District, Chester Valley Golf Course and the cemeteries. East Whiteland Township should make it clear to them that if they ever do have interest in selling land, they should call the Township before talking to developers.

Parks and Recreation Facilities

Establish the Parks and Recreation Facilities as accessible and adaptable community destinations, where residents of all ages and abilities can socialize, connect with nature and have fun!

a. Acquire more park land to fill the gaps and provide access to parks from neighborhoods which are currently isolated. Some areas of the Township, specifically in the south and southwestern portions, do not have access to parks within a 15-minute walk. More parkland in these areas would help to improve these neighborhoods.

b. Continue to properly plan for new parks and park redevelopments. Master plans which are informed by a robust public engagement process will lead to good design which meets the residents’ needs.

c. Prioritize proper management of the trees within the parks. Trees are important as they keep the parks looking good, perform ecosystem services such as stormwater management, provide food and habitat to local fauna and also provide shade to visitors. The Township should conduct hazard tree assessments on a regular basis and consider creating a shade tree commission to assist with tree plantings, care, maintenance and education.
d. Establish policies and procedures which will keep the parks safe and looking good. These policies should include at minimum consistent playground inspections, gift and donation criteria and requirements and a unified signage design strategy.

e. Provide more benches and shade in the parks, especially at playgrounds. More shade and seating will allow the parks to accommodate more visitors and provide a more comfortable experience for caregivers.

f. Upgrade trails and parking to meet or come closer to meeting current standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Many of the parks were designed and built prior to the establishment of ADA requirements. However, there are many opportunities (described in greater detail in Chapter__) to install improvements which would bring amenities up to current standards or at least make them more accessible.

g. Protect Valley Creek and its tributaries with riparian buffer plantings, consisting primarily of trees and shrubs. The creeks are integral parts of many of the parks, due to their scenic beauty and the recreation opportunities they provide, such as fishing. Therefore, in order to keep the streams clean, habitable and beautiful, buffer plantings should be provided where it is possible.

Trails

Connect the community with a system of Trails to encourage walking, bicycling and running and to provide opportunities for stress relief, connection to nature and enjoyment of the outdoors, exercise, recreation and transportation to all.

a. Continue to implement the existing trails plans. The Township, surrounding communities and Chester County have all created plans for improving pedestrian and bicycle trails which either include trails within or connecting to East Whiteland Township. The Township should continue to implement these plans as it sees fit.

b. Plan for and implement trail connections between existing neighborhoods and key destinations. Additional neighborhood trails would provide better access to parks, regional trails, businesses, and other community destinations, all without needing to drive.

c. Enhance access and use of the Chester Valley Trail. East Whiteland Township is lucky to have this major regional trail passing through. More connections would allow the residents to access this great community amenity more easily.

d. Promote safe connections along the main corridors. The busy road and large intersections along Routes 30 and 29 make it difficult for pedestrians and
cyclists to safely travel these important community routes. Improvements here will greatly enhance bike and pedestrian safety.

e. Plan for access to future parks and open space areas. As new parks and open spaces are opened to the pedestrian and bicycle access should be incorporated into their designs.

Land Use & Regulations

Improve and utilize Land Use Regulations to conserve open space, preserve important natural resources, and provide recreation opportunities within the community.

a. Adopt amendments to the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance which will better protect existing trees during the land development process. Enforcing these ordinances is a great way to protect natural resources, improve stormwater management and support local flora and fauna, without spending money to do it.

b. Consider and adopt ordinance standards which permit well designed and properly scaled multi-family and commercial redevelopment where it is appropriate. These types of developments can incorporate trails, parks, and open spaces. They also can provide a dense enough community to support businesses and create a lively neighborhood without the typical, land consumptive sprawl.

c. Prepare for the potential future development around a new SEPTA regional rail station. A new rail station will spur development, so the Township should envision what they want that development to look like. This is the Township’s opportunity to adopt ordinances which require open space preservation and trail connections and encourage compact design.

d. Replace the existing cluster zoning with conservation subdivisions and greater percentages of required open space. Adopting a more modern conservation subdivision ordinance would provide more open space for the township, especially if one of the few remaining large parcels is to be developed.

Programs and Services

Develop, expand, and continue to offer Programs and Services which strengthen the community and allow residents to connect with nature and each other, and engage in active, healthy lifestyles.

a. Continue to provide summer recreation programs, concerts, and special events. These events draw a more diverse population to the parks beyond the typical active park users. Programs and events are a good way to engage with more of the population and to bring them outdoors.
b. Develop a plan to expand programming which would consider year-round program staffing, partnerships with surrounding communities, contracting out some events and revenue generating services.

Organization

Build on the strengths of the Township’s Parks and Recreation Board, administration, elected officials, volunteers, and citizens, to establish an **Organizational Configuration** that best serves the Township’s Parks and Recreation needs.

a. Create a Shade Tree Commission (STC) as a new body or as a subcommittee to the Parks and Recreation Board. The Board of Supervisors should adopt an ordinance which establishes this commission and defines the roles, authority, structure, terms, and responsibilities of members.

b. Create an Open Space Review Board or similar body, independent of the existing boards, to lead the Township activities related to open space preservation. The Board of Supervisors should adopt an ordinance which establishes this board and defines the roles, authority, structure, terms, and responsibilities of members.

c. Upon establishment of an Open Space Review Board, create or update an organizational chart which clarifies that the OSRB, like the Planning Commission and Parks and Recreation Board, is an advisory commission which reports directly to the Board of Supervisors.

d. Establish quarterly multi-committee meetings of the OSRB, PC, PRB, STC and BOS, to include members of each body, to discuss ongoing projects and opportunities for collaboration.

e. Determine the Township’s perspective on establishing a Parks and Recreation Department. A larger department could do more to provide and manage programs and events, manage facility maintenance, apply for parks related grants and explore additional parks and recreation opportunities.

f. Consider a multi-municipal parks and recreation department. A multi-municipal agreement to allow multiple communities to share expertise, equipment and costs while expanding programming and other activities.

g. Explore a grant to plan for the optimal organization framework. DCNR offers PEER grants to municipalities looking for expertise in establishing a new parks and recreation department or adjusting their existing situation.

Finances

Continue to seek additional funds through county, state, and federal grants, and further diversify sources of **Financial Support** to continue improving parks and recreation while easing the burden on the Township budget.

a. Work towards a mix of public and private support with cost recovery goals. Continue to pursue grant funding, but also seek sponsorships, gifts, donations, fees, and charges to cover costs.

b. Phase in this expanded financial support over time, with goals based on average municipal and per capita investment.
3. LAND USE: PUTTING CONSERVATION INTO LOCAL PLANS AND CODES

BACKGROUND

East Whiteland Township residents enjoy diverse housing choices, from apartments to large single-family homes. Transportation options include riding on SEPTA’s most heavily used regional rail line, walking or bicycling the Chester Valley Trail and driving on a road network that affords easy access to interstate highways and the airport. Many residents live near local parks and can also travel short distances to enjoy rural Chester County’s rolling hillsides. As a relatively developed community, where few opportunities exist for large-scale greenway and park acquisition, even a few acres of open space can offer a much-needed respite.

In meetings with the Parks, Recreation and Open Space plan Task Force and a May 2019 community meeting called “Places of the Heart,” residents expressed concern over losing open space at the Bishop Tube site, those concerns most likely due to development pressure. The meetings also revealed that the community valued local parks as favorite places, especially Valley Creek, Battle of the Clouds and Bacton Hill parks. Trail connections were strongly favored, including safer walking trails to Malvern Borough and additional connections to the Chester Valley Trail.

East Whiteland Township Supervisors value quality parks and trails as evidenced by the recent acquisition offer for the wooded, Balderston/Spring Ridge property; construction of a trail linking the 270 homes in the Bryn Erin neighborhood to the Chester Valley Trail, to a long history of planning studies including the Route 29 Multimodal Transportation Study (2014), Patriots Path trail concept (2015) and recent multi-modal transportation and land use plan.

Despite these progressive approaches, the area south of Route 30 lacks adequate parkland; a growing population demands more in terms of parks, programs and facilities; and, residents remain concerned and vocal as the last remaining industrial and open space parcels succumb to development. Like nearly every Chester County municipality, East Whiteland Township faces the challenge of creating an interwoven fabric of conservation and development lands within its boundaries. In working with municipalities over the years, Natural Lands staff have found that successful conservation communities:

- Document community resources, through inventories of natural, cultural, and historic resources.
- Have a realistic understanding of where future development is likely to occur and adjust their goals and strategies as market changes and trends become apparent.
- Set goals for conservation and development.
- Maintain a sound zoning framework that both meets their “fair share” obligations and encourages conservation of special features even as development occurs.
- Adopt a process for “conservation subdivisions” and other development that recognizes the design process is important.
to development outcomes, usually accomplished through design standards and the submission of sketch plans, before detailed engineering is completed.

- Maintain good working relationships with owners of large or important lands, allowing community concerns to be discussed before landowners make irrevocable decisions about development of their properties.

- Adopt mechanisms for acquiring important conservation lands, through purchase, voluntary donations and local subdivision and land development regulations.

- Manage land to provide for trails and other recreational uses, whether accomplished by the Township or in partnership with public, non-profit, and private landowners.

- Have strong local leadership and a broad base of public support for ongoing community dialogue.

CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT

CHALLENGES AND RECOMMENDED STRATEGIES

Communities that are successful at conserving land and managing growth can seldom rely on a single “silver bullet” such as buying all land they wish to remain open. Local land use regulations – the Zoning and Subdivision & Land Development Ordinances, can augment other parks, recreation, and open space efforts. In reviewing the East Whiteland Township land use regulations, the following major issues emerge:

1. **Tree preservation, especially when development occurs.** New development represents the greatest threat to tree canopy cover. While the Township has tree protection standards in place, those standards have been added “piecemeal” over the years and suffer from ambiguity. During the drafting of this plan, suggested SLDO amendments (Article II, Definitions and to SLDO Section 175. B. – D., Trees) were provided to the Township and are included as Appendices B & C.

2. **Multifamily and Commercial redevelopment.** Given the prominence of commercial “strip” development along Route 30, how this corridor evolves will be critical to the quality of life for East Whiteland Township residents, as well as to the tax base. The Township has already prepared the Route 30 Corridor Study, which can help guide development of multi-family and commercial sites. As stated by the Urban Land Institute Senior Fellow Ed McMahon, “The era of strip development is coming to an end...it is becoming increasingly clear that strip retail is retail for the last century. The future belongs to town centers, main streets, and mixed-use development.” (McMahon, Edward T., “The End of the Strip.” *Planners Web* April 24th, 2011.)


While the Route 30 corridor and 202 interchanges warrant high density development, wall to wall commercial development is unattractive and undesirable. Ideally the Township’s major commercial corridors could evolve from continuous linear commercial “strips” to “nodes” or crossroads. While linear shopping centers may not be avoidable, identifying a “gateway” or respite from intense development can distinguish East Whiteland’s commercial corridors from
everyplace else. Where small community open spaces are desired, the Official Map can help to set the development pattern before redevelopment occurs, as well as reserve future trail connections. Where more intensive development is desired, new street patterns can also be plotted on parcels intended for redevelopment.

Once the locations, current or revised, are determined for commercial zoning districts, how those lands are redeveloped is critical to the long-term character of the Township. The following standards should be considered:

- Zoning Section 200-69.F. requires landscaping, including linear tree lawns and interior islands, when more than 20 parking spaces are provided. These are excellent standards that we suggest augmenting by encouraging islands to serve as stormwater infiltration areas.

- Neighboring Tredyffrin Township’s Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance contains more rigorous parking lot landscaping than in East Whiteland. The Township may wish to incorporate some of their requirements, from Section 181-52. D. Parking Lot Landscape, found here: https://ecode360.com/7114992#7114992.

- Chestnuthill Township, Monroe County, adopted mixed use zoning because the local commercial corridor was seeing redevelopment pressure and outlying undeveloped lands were being converted to new commercial and “big box” retail. Those standards, that would be applicable to East Whiteland may be found here: https://ecode360.com/6524480.

- The Township’s current Zoning Table 200, Attachment 7, development standards for mixed use districts, establishes minimum setbacks for buildings from streets. We suggest that the Township also adopt a *maximum* building setback, so that new structures
are positioned closer to existing and new streets, providing a more pedestrian-friendly streetscape environment.

- In addition to adding maximum building setbacks, the Township should consider requiring most parking spaces to be located to the side or rear of buildings.

- Green spaces, in the form of plazas, village greens and other small open spaces should be required for larger-scale redevelopment, such as 50,000 square feet or more of new construction, about the size of a medium-scale grocery store. In some instances, the Township may wish to consider owning these public areas.

- As commercial areas redevelop, the Township can look for opportunities to link redeveloped areas to regional and Township trail networks. An Official Map can help ensure that the trail connections are realized.

3. Potential SEPTA Regional Rail Station. The East Whiteland Train Station Feasibility Study, dated June 2019, concluded that frontage adjacent to Immaculata College was the best location for a new station along SEPTA’s Paoli-Thorndale regional rail line. Concentrating infrastructure investment and encouraging future growth around a potential transit station is ideal. With projected costs exceeding 120 million dollars and other site and logistical hurdles,
a new station is unlikely to be built within the next few years. However, this delay offers East Whiteland the opportunity to rezone now, long before the train station opens for business and developers propose rezoning and development that may not meet Township goals. Taking a proactive approach rather than being forced to react to a developer’s application ensures that the Township determines how the community grows. While high density development is appropriate within a ten-minute walk of the train station, how that density is designed, and the quantity and quality of open space for new residents should be determined by the Township. The Feasibility Study calls for additional plans and studies, including the evaluations of potential transit-oriented development. The Feasibility Study for a new SEPTA regional rail station suggests transit-oriented development, or “TOD”. Such development would typically permit higher density, mixed-use development within a quarter mile walking radius of the train station. In a commercial corridor subject to noise and congestion, place matters. A good first impression of the community matters.

The more East Whiteland’s stretch of Lancaster Avenue looks like all the rest of Lancaster Avenue, the less reason there is to frequent those businesses or choose to live in an apartment there. Township officials can find more information on this development technique at the TOD Institute, (www.tod.org).

Before jumping into ordinance writing the Township would be well-served to develop a vision for how the land within approximately ¼ mile of the new station would be developed. The Executive Summary to Landscapes3, the Chester County Comprehensive Plan, adopted in November 2018, states “Population and business growth pressure will continue to affect the county, with 146,000 new residents projected between 2015 and 2045.” These growth projections challenge Chester County communities to ask, “How can growth be accommodated while preserving the special features that make the County a desirable place to live and work?” Developing high quality suburban centers near transit, with trail connections and outdoor amenities is one way to
accommodate growth by placing density where it belongs.

Transit-oriented development in a suburban context, such as East Whiteland, would typically include a mixture of uses including multi-family housing, retail, small offices, and perhaps even civic uses. It is important for the plan/vision to include public participation and to arrive at consensus in answering the following questions:

- What improvements are needed to ensure a high-quality walking and bicycling experience to and from the station?
- Where are opportunities for public spaces, whether a small “green” designed for a new apartment building or a larger civic plaza? Such spaces can easily be accommodated on a few thousand square feet, less than an acre of land.
- What is the Township’s desired mix of permitted uses and at what scale? A market study could inform the “mix” of residential, retail and office uses the new zoning would permit.
- How can the plan and subsequent zoning ensure that ground floor uses are inviting and avoid long, continuous blank walls with “dead” frontage?
- How can wide sidewalks be incorporated into the station area and new TOD neighborhoods? Would uses such as sidewalk cafes be appropriate in some areas?
- How can trees and tree-lined streets be incorporated into the TOD neighborhoods in perpetuity? Trees help create a sense of place, provide pedestrian comfort, and reduce energy consumption.
- How can modern approaches to parking, including maximum parking ratios, central and shared parking lots, and side or rear yard parking areas be incorporated into the TOD neighborhood?

Once the vision is developed, it must be translated into Zoning and SLDO ordinance language. The Township is no stranger to mixed-use zoning, with Article VI devoted to seven mixed-use, mapped zoning districts and six mixed-use overlay districts.

The GVR, Great Valley Revitalization Overlay District is an excellent mixed-use zoning example in that it includes design guidelines, with standards for new development form adopted in SLDO, Appendix VI. These standards encompass elements also important to TOD, such as street and block dimensions; streetscape; green & open space; architecture; signage; parking; and stormwater management.

While the GVR standards will not translate directly to the new TOD area, the guidelines can be adapted to the needs of a new TOD zoning district and use a similar format so that the Township codes have consistent terminology and appearance. The ultimate outcome should be shaping new TOD development that incorporates trail connections and outdoor spaces such as village greens and civic plazas.

4. Replace outdated cluster zoning with conservation subdivisions and greater percentages of required open space. The existing cluster ordinance is outdated. Although few opportunities exist for larger-scale residential development, even a few
acres of open space in a new residential development can help meet growing needs for parkland, trail connections and open space; as well as mitigate stormwater runoff. We suggest that the Township continue to offer cluster but replace it with a variation called conservation subdivision design, which places a greater emphasis on the quantity and quality of open space in new developments, while maintaining the currently permitted density.

a. The most critical changes to the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance would include:

- **Adding a requirement for a site visit.** Because it is impossible to completely understand a site only by examining a two-dimensional paper document inside a municipal building, it is essential that Planning Commission members walk the property, ideally during the Sketch Plan phase, with the Conservation Plan in hand, to take the full measure of the proposed development site. Such visits really help provide a much better understanding of the best locations for potential conservation areas on site and their potential linkages to natural or cultural features, including trails, on adjacent properties that might be developed sometime in the future. Such inspections constitute informal outdoor work sessions of the Planning Commission, conducted for information-gathering purposes only, at which no formal decisions are made. The meeting is duly noticed and advertised in the normal manner, as required for any meeting of the Commission.

- **Four-Step Design Process.** We believe that the most effective methodology for producing subdivision layouts which are centered on the principle of land conservation is one that begins with the determination of open space as the first step. If open space is prioritized, and the ordinance requires that a significant proportion of the unconstrained land be designated as open space, it is nearly impossible to produce a truly inferior plan. The logical second step, after locating the open space areas, is to select house locations, with homes positioned to take maximum advantage of the open space in neighborhood squares, greens, pocket parks or woodland preserves. The third step involves “connecting the dots” by aligning the streets and trails to serve the new homes. Drawing in the lot lines, Step Four, is the least significant part of the process.

- **Design Standards for Conservation Lands.** In order to inform the above design process, we recommend that the Subdivision Ordinance be updated to include a “Prioritized List of Resources to be Conserved”, as contained in Section 603.A of the model Growing Greener ordinance: https://conservationtools.org/library_items/470-Growing-Greener-Model-Ordinance-Version-2.0-. You can adopt different conservation priorities for different areas of East Whiteland Township, specifically addressing the stream protection, tree preservation and other conservation goals in Township plans.
The most critical changes to the Zoning Ordinance would include:

- **Calculating Open Space.** Many earlier cluster codes set the open space requirement fairly low. This includes East Whiteland’s, which requires only 30% of the gross tract area (meaning that percentage of the total parcel acreage) be conserved as open space. Conservation design sets minimum open space requirements as a percentage of the net buildable land area that is not constrained by wetlands, floodplain, or steep slopes. This ensures that a good part of the total open space will indeed be usable by more than ducks or mountain goats. Conservation subdivision ordinances require that 50% to 70% of the net usable tract area, plus all the land constrained by wetlands, floodplain, or steep slopes, must be conserved.

- **The Modern Idea of “Density Disincentives”**. Many cluster ordinances allow a density bonus as a “carrot” to entice developers to select that option. Happily, the East Whiteland ordinance does not. However, the Township could avoid the grave error of continuing to allow conventional land consumptive sprawl development as a full-density option, granted “by right”. We recommend reversing this dynamic, so that developers must “earn” their basic full standard density through conservation design with significant open space. Under this approach, there is no density bonus for the standard conservation subdivision with 50 percent of the unconstrained land plus all constrained land, designated as open space. That kind of development becomes the basic standard and is the only way for developers to achieve full density. Those who wish to continue with cookie-cutter designs covering the entire development tract with house lots and streets may do so, but only at a lower overall density. Under conservation subdivision design ordinances, communities discourage large-lot subdivisions by reducing the overall density (or “lot yield”) for applicants who elect not to participate in the conservation design approach.

If the Township replaced the cluster option with conservation subdivision design, it could be applied in the R1, R2 and R3 districts as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>R-1 District</th>
<th>R-2 District</th>
<th>R-3 District</th>
</tr>
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<td>1 du/dev acre</td>
<td>2 du/dev acre</td>
<td>2.5 du/dev acre</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Open Space %</td>
<td>50*</td>
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</table>

- Open space is a percentage of developable area plus all constrained land
5. **Miscellaneous Ordinance observations.**

Here are some additional updates to Township ordinances that could help to create a greener East Whiteland Township.

a. **Skinny streets.** SLDO Section 175-31 establishes standards for new streets. The street widths seem overly wide for new residential development, resulting in 1) higher speeds that are more dangerous for pedestrians and 2) produce more stormwater runoff that increases Township MS4 obligations and costs. For perspective, the Pennsylvania Turnpike lanes are 12 feet wide and the Township’s required minor street width of 32 feet, means each lane is paved to 16 feet! *Residential Streets, 3rd edition*, published by the Urban Land Institute, American Society of Civil Engineers, National Association of Homebuilders and Institute of Traffic Engineering advises that on most local streets, a 24 to 26 width pavement is the most appropriate width, providing two parking lanes and a traffic lane. For lower-volume streets with limited parking a 22 to 24-foot wide pavement is adequate. Wide streets make for both unattractive settings for houses and more important, encourage higher, unsafe speeds and produce more stormwater runoff. To the extent the Township takes responsibility for new streets, the cost of plowing and repaving is higher than for narrower streets.

b. **Public Land Dedication and Fee In Lieu.**

The Township already has standards that require recreation land dedication or a fee in lieu for new residential development, in SLDO Section 175-40. The Township may also wish to consider applying the standards to non-residential development.

c. **Developable Acreage.** The Township deducts the environmentally sensitive features from gross tract acreage: floodplains, wetlands and “sensitive areas” which appear to be contaminated lands. Most Townships also fully, or partially deduct slopes over 25% from developable acreage calculations, an approach that East Whiteland should consider.

d. **Dark Skies.** Most of this plan has addressed actions that Township can take, “on the ground” to improve parks, recreation, and natural areas for Township residents. We would be remiss if we failed to address the skies above. In addition to addressing pollution to water and land, the Township can take measures to manage light pollution. The International Dark-Sky Association has published model lighting ordinances that a community can use to control light pollution, including glare, light trespass and skylow. Given the developed nature of East Whiteland, it is unrealistic to think that skies would return to a pre-industrial level of darkness. However, the model ordinance assists with community-friendly sports lighting; zones that classify land use with appropriate lighting levels; and standards to control up lighting and glare. Communities that have adopted similar standards have also seen cost
savings and increased safety (for more information, see www.darksky.org).

Summary

Communities that successfully conserve land employ several techniques including documenting community resources, setting reasonable goals for conservation and development, and establishing a sound zoning and procedural framework. But no conservation review would be complete without mentioning that East Whiteland Township’s efforts at working with landowners and selectively using public funds to purchase open space are also vital to conserving community character. By combining selective acquisitions or donations with development regulations that conserve natural areas, the Township can continue to grow and redevelop while maintaining a high quality of life for residents.
4. A PLAN FOR OPEN SPACE

CONTEXT

East Whiteland Township has seen heavy development since the 1950’s, a time when highways were touted as community benefits and neighborhoods were designed around the use of the car. Open space was largely an afterthought. With routes 29, 30, 202 and 401 all crisscrossing the Township and the Pennsylvania Turnpike skirting the Township’s northern boundary, it is no wonder that East Whiteland has developed more heavily and earlier than the surrounding communities and now features less public and protected land. We now know that open space is vital for relieving stress, getting people outdoors and connecting people to nature. For these reasons, East Whiteland should focus on preserving parcels which meet the community’s needs.

Within East Whiteland Township, approximately 650 acres of land are protected by easement, deed restriction or other legal agreement, or owned by the Township or County. These public and protected lands represent approximately 9% of the Township. The Township owns approximately 200 acres of land in parks and open spaces. The remaining 450 acres are owned by a variety of homeowners and condominium associations, private landowners, and Chester County. The properties owned by the Township and Chester County permit public access. The remaining lands are not open to the public but provide open space for use by their own residents, owners or invited visitors.

For reference, the five townships which surround East Whiteland have protected land ranging from 17% up to 41% of their total land area, according to the 2018 Chester County Protected Open Space Tracking (POST) database and online maps. Many of the surrounding townships benefit from county, state or national parks, like Valley Forge. (https://www.chescoplanning.org/OpenSpace/POST.cfm). This range should be used as a reference for better understanding of conservation in the region. This range should not be considered as a benchmark, as each municipality is different and faces different opportunities and challenges. For instance, West Whiteland, at 20%, benefits from over 400 acres of land owned by Chester County in Exton Park. Valley Forge National Historic Site contains over 700 acres in Tredyffrin Township, which has 17% protected land. Willistown Township, which boasts a 41% protection rate, benefits from the work of the Willistown Conservation Trust and Brandywine Conservancy, which are active in conserving land in the southern portion of the township, far from the development pressure along Routes 30 and 202. Similarly, Charlestown Township which has a 33% conservation rate, does not face nearly the same development pressure of the other communities. All of these communities are different. They have different populations, geographies, and histories which contribute to the amount of land preserved in each. Therefore, East Whiteland should pursue open spaces which meet their needs, rather than simply trying to meet a percentage or benchmark.
<table>
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<th>Name</th>
<th>Size (Ac.)</th>
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CHALLENGES

At first glance, East Whiteland Township appears to be in a difficult position for conserving more open space. Much of the Township is already developed with a mix of medium to high density residential, office buildings, commercial centers, cemeteries, golf courses and industrial uses like quarries. Major roads including State Routes 202, 401, 30 and 29 crisscross the Township, isolating large sections. Similarly, railroads and utilities cross the Township, bringing ugly infrastructure like power line towers. Few large, undeveloped parcels remain. Most of the woodlands and other natural features have been cleared, yet the Township still contains Exceptional Value and High-Quality streams. There is little agriculture left, with a few exceptions, having been developed long ago.

OPPORTUNITIES

Many of the same conditions which appear to hinder conservation may actually lead to opportunities for conserving land and expanding the Township’s Parks, Recreation and Open Space network. The streams which flow throughout the township have made it difficult to develop some areas, but now offer opportunities for conservation and recreation. The roads, railroads and utilities have created some parcels which are remnants, or otherwise undesirable or unsuitable for residential or commercial development but could become parks or naturalized areas. Some industrial uses are fading, and their sites could be primed for redevelopment or conservation. In some cases, the large corporate centers own and maintain more land than they seemingly need, potentially opening the door for partnerships, agreements, or acquisition. By looking for opportunities alongside these constraints, East Whiteland can conserve land for parks, recreation and open space and continue to improve the community.

GETTING STARTED: A LAND CONSERVATION PRIMER

Later sections of this chapter suggest priorities for land protection and how land use regulations can assist in creating an interconnected network of trails and open space as development occurs. No stranger to land protection, the Township demonstrates an ongoing commitment to expanding parkland, connecting trails and improving existing parks. However, in the past the Township has typically taken a one-off approach to conservation, applying for funding to conserve specific parcels as opportunities arise. In order to bring a new strategic focus to implementing conservation and recreation goals, the Township should follow these steps to establishing a consistent process and plan for the future.

Create a Formal Advisory Board to Lead Open Space Conservation. In order to implement this plan and garner public support for spending on open space conservation it will be essential to share accurate information regarding land conservation with residents, elected officials and their advisors. The Township should create a formal body, such as an Open Space Review Board (OSRB) to assist with frank and open discussions about open space acquisition projects. The Township already has a well-
established and highly functioning Parks and Recreation Board. A similar advisory board officially charged with guiding the land acquisition process can assist the Supervisors in vetting properties and determining how to allocate scarce resources. Because parks and recreation and land acquisition are closely linked, there should be some overlap between membership on the two boards. The Open Space Review Board could be a standalone body which reports directly the Board of Supervisors, or could act as a sub-committee of the Parks and Recreation Board.

Duties of the OSRB may include:

- Attendance at regularly scheduled and advertised committee meetings;
- Review and use of maps, open space plans and implementation of conservation strategies;
- Review of subdivision and land development applications;
- Support of conservation initiatives such as referenda, events or programming;
- Application of open space conservation criteria;
- Preparation of conservation recommendations to the Board of Supervisors;
- Outreach to landowners regarding conservation;
- Preparation of grant applications (with Township staff).

Open Space Review Boards often include landowners who have already donated land or conservation easements. Such advisory boards are required if the Township were to pass an open space referendum. While not currently required, Chester County municipalities with robust land acquisition programs typically have

Open Space Review Boards that keep open space on the front burner. Having a Township appointed group responsible for landowner outreach and for recommending projects, lets landowners know that the Township values conservation.

Formalize Coordination and Communication with existing Boards and Commissions. The Open Space Review Board cannot operate properly without interacting with the other township boards and commissions. The OSRB should provide recommendations and comments to other groups and solicit input from them as well. Therefore, the township should establish quarterly meetings of representatives of the OSRB, planning commission, parks and recreation board and Board of Supervisors to discuss how their duties intersect, how they can inform and assist each other. These interactions may be informal in nature, as the group may simply discuss common issues, or they could become more formal, through joint projects or policies. Between the quarterly meetings, the boards and commissions should be kept informed by reviewing meeting minutes from all of the board and commission meetings.
**Dedicate Funding for Open Space.** According to the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission’s 2019 map of Locally Funded Open Space Programs, thirty-three Chester County Townships (see Appendix F) have formalized their open space programs through open space referenda - a ballot question which asks voters to approve funding the acquisition of open space. For more information about how to conduct a referendum, please see the guide published by the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association, included as Appendix G. Typically, this funding comes in the form of an earned income tax (EIT) or through borrowing money to purchase bonds. Funding from the taxpayers gives a municipality a seat at the table with willing landowners and higher scores on most grant applications, permitting them to leverage local dollars exponentially. Additionally, by putting open space funding on a ballot, it justifies the expenditure. The ballot question must pass, and that can only happen if a majority of the residents vote in favor. This provides municipal leadership with a mandate to spend funds on open space preservation.

A referendum must be run as a political campaign with special consideration given to timing and establishment of purpose. If East Whiteland Township wished to consider a referendum, the PA Land Trust Association’s guidance is a good starting point:


Most municipalities engage a consultant to run their campaign and help build support for open space preservation. One way to gauge public support for a referendum would be a survey of “super voters” people who have voted in two out of the last three elections. The League of Conservation Voters can provide lists of super voters as well as a survey which can be sent to those most likely to vote to determine whether they would be in favor, or not, of the referendum. By taking the pulse of the community first, Townships can determine if the larger campaign is likely to succeed.

Some Townships have adequate reserve funds or can allocate funds in a capital budget, to meet their land protection needs. East Whiteland Township has successfully used this approach and leveraged the monies with outside grants. In the short term the open space program can continue using this approach but would be better supported and set up for long term success with dedicated funding.

**Conduct Landowner Outreach.** With the adoption of this plan and appointment of an Open Space Review Board, the Township is prepared to begin landowner outreach. The Open Space Review Board leads this effort, relying on the landowner list prepared in conjunction with this plan. Successful landowner outreach usually occurs one of two ways. First, the Open Space Review Board may organize an invitation only, small gathering at the home of a landowner who has already conserved their land, at which the landowner would describe how and why they chose conservation. The Open Space Review Board members can then share the Township’s interest in acquiring land either in fee or in purchasing a conservation easement. In East Whiteland Township, only a few landowners have conserved their property. However, a resident in a neighboring Township who protected their land might be an effective substitute. Second, the Open Space Review Board may host an additional meeting of interested landowners, ideally away from the
Township building, at a small venue. By starting the process with the dozen or so highest priority landowners, the Open Space Review Board will begin to understand landowner interest and the likelihood of the discussion progressing to acquisition of land or easements.

**Pursue Transactional Assistance.** As buying land is a “now and then” activity, and not a routine job responsibility, few Townships have staff with the time and/or expertise to purchase land. The Township should partner with land conservancies to negotiate with landowners, and ensure that transactional requirements such as appraisals, title searches, environmental reviews and conservation easements, when applicable, are properly completed.

**Guide Creation of Master Plans and Trail Plans for New Acquisitions.** We advise Townships to prepare master site plans for new land acquisitions and that those plans address both how the public will use the site and how Township staff will maintain the property. Getting public buy in and including maintenance staff in the process ensures well-used and well-maintained parks and open spaces. The Open Space Review Board can guide this process, with the Parks and Recreation Board participating where active recreation facilities and public trails are involved. Where conservation easements are established, a trail plan may be required in lieu of a full-blown master plan. Most public funding requires that some level of public access be permitted on the site. For most properties, this means establishment of a trail within an easement on the conserved property. The Open Space Review Board, in partnership with the Parks and Recreation Board, should ensure that these trail easements and trails are implemented to create sustainable, connected trails and meet the goals of this plan.

**Methods for Conserving Open Space.** East Whiteland Township can use many different means to conserve open space. Every property is different, every landowner has different needs and wishes, and the Township has different reasons for wishing to conserve different parcels. There is no one size fits all conservation method. The four methods that East Whiteland is most likely to use are:

1. Purchase or Fee Simple Acquisition
2. Conservation Easement
3. Lease
4. Dedication required by Land Use Regulations

The public should continue to be involved in master planning for parks and open spaces. By acquiring land, the Township can set priorities for its use, which may include providing habitat and stewarding nature.
Other arrangements or other kinds of legal agreements may also be utilized, but these are the four most common and applicable methods. Each is described in greater detail below.

**Purchase or Fee-Simple Acquisition.** The most common means for a municipality to fully control land is through fee simple acquisition, sometimes referred to as outright purchase. This means the Township owns the property and can manage it as they see fit. Acquisition is likely the best method for East Whiteland Township to acquire more land for new parks and recreation facilities that require maintenance. Acquisition is also typically the preferred method for expanding existing parks. Acquisition should also be considered when a parcel contains a sensitive use, such as a natural area with important features, or a historic site, which would benefit from buffering and Township oversight. In some cases, fee simple acquisition may be followed by establishment of a conservation easement.

Sometimes Townships face opportunities to acquire parcels they do not wish to own or manage in perpetuity. In this case, the Township may wish to acquire the land, place trail and conservation easements on the property to ensure its protection and contribution to the trails network, and then sell the property to a private owner. These are rare instances which put the Township in the real estate business. When critical trail connections or important resources are at stake, this option is worth considering.

The Township may wish to consider placing conservation easements on parks and open spaces which they own to prevent their sale for profit during a period of robust development or times of financial struggle for the Township. Easements should only be established after master planning and public input determine the best uses and layout for each park.

**Conservation Easements.** In addition to purchasing land outright, townships can also purchase conservation easements to meet local open space goals. A conservation easement limits certain uses on a property (such as development) in order to advance conservation purposes while keeping the land under private ownership, control and maintenance.

Conservation easements relieve the municipality of the burden of managing the land and the cost of maintaining it. Conservation easements are often used to preserve farmland, prohibiting future subdivision and enabling the farmer to live on and farm the property. Conservation easements are also frequently used to protect sensitive natural resources such as woodlands, wetlands, floodplains and streams and to establish trails alongside or through the resources, thereby allowing public access to an interconnected trail network. The Township would want to ensure that these easements permit the Township (or group responsible for the trail) to maintain the trails. Because the land remains in private ownership, the cost of purchasing the conservation easement is lower than the cost of purchasing the property outright.

Conservation easements are worth pursuing as they can conserve land and provide public benefits without burdening township resources for long term maintenance. However, there is one major drawback – the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, one of

By implementing Conservation Subdivision ordinances, open space can be preserved within new developments.
Pennsylvania’s primary conservation funders, is less likely to fund conservation easements than the fee simple purchase of land. Newlin Township has a very small population and adequate parkland and encourages landowners to donate conservation easements on their land. Seeing the value of the eased land to conserving the rural viewsheds and farms, the Township uses referendum money to cover the cost of the conservation easement preparation. East Whiteland could take a similar approach and encourage landowners to donate easements and pursue related tax benefits, rather than selling easements in return for cash. (Please see Appendix H for an easy to reproduce, four page handout about Conservation Easements.)

**Leases.** Leasing a property can be a useful option for the Township if a more permanent solution is not possible. In this case, the Township would sign an agreement to use the property, typically for a specific purpose or for accessibility, such as leasing a recreation field from an office park that no longer uses it. The lease may be indefinite or may have a specified term. In either scenario, their permanent utility may be limited as lease agreements may be terminated or a landowner may change causing the lease to terminate. Nonetheless, leases can be useful in certain situations where it is difficult for the Township to acquire an interest in the land. In East Whiteland, a lease may also be useful where the Township needs a large property for an annual event. Rather than investing in permanent improvements which could be lost at the termination of the lease, the township could use temporary improvements and amenities, such as food trucks, temporary stages or tents, bounce houses and similar improvements. This situation would also be most applicable to business parks with infrastructure such as parking and also a lot of underutilized open lands.

**Land Use Regulations.** Chapter 3 discusses how natural areas and open space can be conserved as development occurs. Because Townships can seldom afford to purchase all the land they wish to own, this plan reminds East Whiteland to “buy the best and zone the rest” relying on land use regulations to conserve some of the natural areas that residents enjoy, even as development occurs.

There is no simple way to definitively state in this plan how and when to use each of these methods. With time and experience, the Open Space Review Board, elected officials and township administration will become more familiar and comfortable with each method and gain a better understanding of when to use each method. Continued use of fee simple purchase, conservation easements, leases and land protection through development, will ensure that the open space system continues to grow and meet the needs of the township residents.

**OPEN SPACE RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Conservation Opportunities Map demonstrates the challenges which East Whiteland faces. There are very few large, undeveloped parcels left, and those that do remain are problematic for a variety of reasons. There are few obvious opportunities for conservation. Therefore, it is tempting to attempt to conserve any parcel that is available. However, the Township must follow a strategy which builds on their existing strengths and takes advantage of the landscape which exists within the Township. **Also, we always recommend working only with landowners who express willingness to conserve their property.** Considering all of these factors, East Whiteland Township’s conservation strategy should follow these six **Key Recommendations** and could target the landscapes described under each.
Conserve parcels which will protect or improve water quality in the Exceptional Value (EV) and High Quality (HQ) stream watersheds.

Most of East Whiteland is within the Valley Creek watershed, while the southwestern corner is within the Ridley Creek watershed. Valley Creek is one of only 16 streams in Chester County designated as having EV status by the PA Department of Environmental Protection. This designation is applied only to streams with the best water quality. The Ridley Creek is designated as an HQ stream, meaning it holds water of the second highest quality. These clean water resources are worthy of protection in their own right, but can typically be coupled with restoration, nature trails, fishing piers or other recreation opportunities. In most cases, conservation easements would likely be the preferred method of conservation.

The Valley Creek flows through three privately owned, wooded properties along Rt 401. Other wooded single-family lots exist uphill from these, along Phoenixville Pike. Together, these properties contain over 60 acres of mostly wooded land, which help absorb and filter stormwater before it flows into Valley Creek, which helps to protect its water quality. These parcels could, with agreement from the owners, be placed under easement, to protect the woodlands and stream, provide trails, which may help children safely walk to school, and connect to the nearby Aston Woods and Springridge properties.

Conserve land in the southern (especially southwestern) portion of the Township, where there is currently a lack of parks or open space.

East Whiteland features a variety of sizes and types of parks and open spaces spread across the Township. However, the southern portion, and particularly the southwestern corner, lack any parks, recreation or open space facilities of significance. These neighborhoods are cut off from the existing parks by multiple sets of railroad tracks and Route 30, with few crossings. The Township must acquire large parcels of land from a single owner, or cobble together multiple, smaller privately owned properties to create a meaningful park or open space for public use.

The southwestern corner of the Township, bounded by King and Morestein Roads and the Township borders, contains many undeveloped parcels, which could be aggregated for conservation. The Great Valley Little League property should be included in planning for this area, as there could be opportunities to share facilities, partner on projects such as trails and apply for grants together.

Immaculata and its affiliates may present opportunities for land conservation, potentially in conjunction with acquisition of adjacent smaller properties.

The open field bounded by King Road, Frazer Road, and Immaculata’s Camilla and Gillet Drives contains approximately 32 acres. It appears that slightly more than half of it is currently farmed in row crops. Athletic fields may be mowed into a portion of the remaining land on a seasonal basis. This area would provide ample land for a good park of similar size to Valley Creek. It would also have access to two major roads. There could be opportunities to partner with Immaculata on programming, events and maintenance.
The parcel southeast of the intersection of Frazer Road and College Avenue contains approximately 8 acres of land, most of which is farmed in row crops. This small parcel could be useful as a small park on its own, in a neighborhood devoid of public space. But relatively undeveloped, wooded parcels exist to the south. Acquisition of these parcels could create a park of nearly 23 acres. The combination of wooded natural areas, with the farm field, would provide opportunities to create a mix of active and passive recreation.

South of King Road, the Convent of the Sisters owns three parcels, totaling approximately 95 acres. One 25-acre parcel is currently vacant and contains a headwater tributary of Ridley Creek. Another 35-acre parcel, west of Hershey Mill Road, also contains a headwater tributary of Ridley Creek, a pond, woodlands, and at least 6 homes and maintenance buildings. Either of these parcels could be appropriate for creation of a new park or preserved open space on their own. The remaining parcel contains approximately 85 acres, but also holds most of the Villa Maria Academy campus. Portions of the parcel are vacant and could potentially be subdivided. Additionally, the Sisters own fifteen acres south of the campus, within East Goshen Township. This parcel should also be considered for conservation if others in the area are also conserved.

Conserve parcels which are adjacent to existing parks and open spaces to expand opportunities for recreation, increase protection of contiguous natural features or to connect existing parks and open spaces to neighborhoods, commercial centers or other important community destinations. In some cases, leases or informal agreements may achieve the same purpose.

Cerner Health’s campus is contained within a 111-acre property, adjacent to Valley Creek Park. Roughly half of the property is protected by a conservation easement. This area contains Valley Creek, a nature trail, woodlands and two baseball/softball fields. The Township should work with Cerner to establish agreements to permit residents to use the lands and facilities within the easement area.

Down East Park contains approximately 2.5 acres, but could be expanded to contain approximately 16 acres, through additional acquisitions or agreements.

Little Valley Creek flows through a three-acre wooded parcel to the west of Down East Park. By conserving this property, East Whiteland could ensure that the stream is protected, provide nature trails and opportunities for birding and other nature-based recreation.

PECO owns a 10.2-acre property directly south of the park. People’s Light and other local businesses already lease portions of the property for parking and storage. The Township could also lease a portion of the land to expand
Down East Park, and/or create walking paths to People’s Light.

50 GVP Co owns 22.5 acres east of the park and permits an informal trail connecting Winding Way, through their property, to the Chester Valley Trail. The Township could enter into agreements with 50 GVP to formalize this trail corridor, connect it to Down East Park, protect Little Valley Creek and potentially establish nature trails within the wooded area.

A 2.5-acre property owned by private citizens contains their home, garages, driveway and a series of ponds which feed Little Valley Creek. This property is owned by the same people that own the wooded property, described above in i. If the three-acre parcel were to be acquired, the Township may consider attempting to also acquire a portion of this parcel, in order to protect the ponds and tributary, by establishing buffering. Similarly, a nearby 0.43 acres, could also be conserved to protect the stream and extend the park or trails.

Battle of the Clouds Park contains 11.7 acres of active recreation areas, and is hemmed in by Phoenixville Pike, the Chester Valley Trail and Haim Solomon Cemetery. The cemetery, east of the park, contains 38.8 acres, only approximately 2/3 of which appear to be currently used. The remainder of the property is wooded. The Township could attempt to acquire approximately 15 acres of these woodlands to conserve the natural features, provide nature trails and other nature-based recreation.

Gunkel Spring Mill, the 1.7-acre historic site at the corner of Moores Road and Conestoga Road is currently isolated between the intersection and the St. Gobain property. The St. Gobain property contains approximately 66 acres. The westernmost triangular section of the property contains approximately 15 acres of lawn and a baseball/softball field which is adjacent to the historic site. If the Township could acquire this lawn and field, a new park could be created which would enhance the experience at the historic site and could feature passive and active recreation facilities. The park would not be walkable to most residents, but there could be opportunities for shared parking with the office building.

Whiteland Farm Park (Birch Road), the 1.36-acre neighborhood park, could become a local trailhead, allowing residents to access the nearby shopping center without using Malin Road. The parcels are adjacent, and a trail could easily be established. Additionally, to the west of the park, Frazer Mennonite owns two parcels totaling approximately 9.3 acres. They are under high tension lines. One parcel contains a stormwater basin and a portion of the church’s parking lot. The westernmost parcel appears to be used for soccer, as two goals are visible in aerial photographs. A tributary to Valley Creek flows through the western parcel. The Township could consider conserving these parcels and expanding Whiteland Farm Park or establishing additional trails.

Few large parcels remain undeveloped, which means the Township may need to consider unconventional open space preservation, like that of quarried sites.

Conserve the few remaining undeveloped large parcels for use as parks, open space with trails or natural areas.
The Springridge property is a 98.7 ac wooded tract which lies at the northernmost boundary of the Township, where it borders Charlestown Township. The owner also owns an adjacent 42-acre property over the line in Charlestown. The site is important as it holds one of the last remaining large woodlands in the Township, as well as headwater tributaries of Valley Creek. The property is also adjacent to the Township owned Aston Woods property. The Township’s Comprehensive Plan also shows a potential trail through the site. East Whiteland has applied to DCNR for funds to acquire the site.

The Knickerbocker site contains approximately 175 ac and was previously a landfill but has the potential to become a community park. The site features open meadows, woodlands and an important stretch of Valley Creek in close proximity to residential neighborhoods and corporate centers. The site could accommodate trails which could connect residents and businesses to the park, and to the existing Valley Creek and Ecology Parks. Alternatively, the site could potentially become warehouses or hundreds of new homes.

Immaculata and its affiliates hold over 362 acres of land within East Whiteland, which is more than any other landholder. All of their holdings are within the southeastern portion of the Township, an area devoid of parks, open spaces and recreational opportunities. While the college occupies much of the land with buildings, parking and other facilities, much of the land, including entire parcels, is currently being “underused.” Some parcels are not developed and may not even be managed. Others are being farmed for corn or soy. The Township should work to strengthen their relationship with Immaculata and the Sisters of the Convent to explore potential partnerships or conservation and recreation opportunities. Most importantly, the Township should position themselves so that Immaculata will call them first when considering selling land.

The Glasgow quarry site contains 245 acres, spread across three parcels. This site could potentially become a park in the future. Approximately 75 acres of the site are currently being quarried to extreme depths. The remaining acreage could potentially be rehabilitated and converted to parkland, to be used for a mix of active and passive uses, including some natural areas. Quarried lands can be developed, as evidenced by the Atwater development across Route 29, which is now home to offices, commercial pad sites and high-density residential homes.

In the late 90’s and early 2000’s, Falls Township, Bucks County, created a community park from a former quarry site. That 230-acre park contains a lake in the former quarry, which is used for fishing and boating. The rest of the site holds a roller hockey rink, dog park, basketball courts, pavilions, baseball and softball fields, a skatepark, boat ramp, sledding hill, multipurpose fields and over three miles of loop trails. Through cooperation with Glasgow, East Whiteland could potentially create something similar in the future.

The Bishop Tube site contains only 13.6 acres, but the site could accommodate a neighborhood scale park. It currently contains a mix of forest, open areas and remnant industrial buildings. The Little Valley Creek also flows through the site. The site is isolated and would likely cater to the residents of General Warren Village, almost exclusively. There are potential opportunities to expand conservation around the site to provide improved access and greater open space and recreational opportunities. The 6.3-acre Swope Lees property is directly south of Bishop Tube, is mostly forested and also contains Little Valley Creek. Adding this property would increase the
park to nearly 20 acres. Establishing a park at this site would also provide access to the residents of General Warren Village to Malin Road, allowing them to walk safely to Lancaster Avenue.

If a 20-acre park could be established including the Bishop Tube and Swope Lees properties, the Township could consider additional conservation opportunities and trail easements in the area to improve access from Spring Road and Three Tun Road.

The Township appears to own a paper street. However, it may have reverted to the neighboring property owners. The Township could potentially use this paper street stub as a trail head.

Acquiring additional land and/or establishing a trail easement through private properties to provide access to the park from Three Tun Road. This area features a mix of commercial, industrial and office uses, including a dog training center and a craft brewery and tasting room. Some parcels are vacant. The Township could consider acquiring some of the vacant parcels and partnering with Buckeye Terminals to establish a trail easement. This would allow the residents of General Warren Village to walk to the businesses on Three Tun Road. It would also allow the employees on Three Tun Road to walk to the park.

Many corporate offices own and mow more land than they use, creating opportunities for acquisition, lease or other agreements.

Green Fig Land, Whiteland Holdings and PECO own a group of parcels on the western edge of the Township which contain a total of approximately 112 acres. It appears that portions of the site may be undergoing remediation, demolition or other treatment. Additionally, it appears that a transfer station sits on a portion of PECO’s lands. If the land is suitable, this would be an interesting location for a park or open space. The Chester Valley Trail provides the northern boundary of the sites and connects them to Bacton Hill Park, across Swedesford Road, and to Battle of the Clouds and Down East Parks, down the trail to the east. Additionally, West Whiteland Township owns approximately 32 acres adjacent to the west.
Explore opportunities to acquire, conserve, lease or otherwise make use of lands owned by corporations or office complexes.

East Whiteland is well known as the home of Vanguard, St. Gobain and other corporations. Most of their corporate headquarters are on large parcels and consume a great deal of land. However, it appears that some of these parcels are not being used to their fullest potential, either due to building restrictions, incompatible natural resources or other reasons. Some of this land could be suitable for parks, recreation and open space uses. Opportunities may include:

St. Gobain/ Mountain Laurel Funding Co. LLC, (Described above in 3.d Gunkel Spring Mill) corporate office sits on approximately 66 acres, 15 of which are in lawn, which could be repurposed for recreational use. Valley Creek flows through the wooded portion of the site. The Township could engage the landowner in discussions about conservation, partnerships or other ways to better use this land for conservation and recreation, including enhancing the experience at the historic Gunkel Spring Mill.

Frazer CSC LLC sits on a 30-acre parcel which contains approximately 11 acres of warehouses, plus parking and loading areas for tractor trailers. The property fronts on Lee Boulevard. The rear portion of the site fronts on Flat and Sidley Roads. This area contains approximately 8 acres of undeveloped, open lands. It appears to contain a sink hole, signaling that this area may be unsuitable for further development.

However, it could still be suitable for a park or naturalized setting. The Places of the Heart meeting revealed that many people like to walk or bike along Flat and Sidley Roads. However, there are no bike or pedestrian facilities here. Conversion of this eight-acre area into a park could incorporate trails or sidewalks, around naturalized plantings of meadows and trees. This area could also connect to the 11.7-acre Pickford Run HOA land across Flat Road, and the open space to be conserved as part of the Toll Brothers development further down Flat Road.

Build relationships with owners of large properties which are not obvious opportunities for conservation, including the Great Valley School District, Chester Valley Golf Course and the cemeteries.

While it is unlikely that any of these institutions will divest themselves of land any time soon, East Whiteland Township should make it clear to them that if they ever do have interest in selling land, they should call the Township before talking to developers. The School District owns approximately 66 acres of vacant or undeveloped land in the Township. Should enrollment decrease, or the district become built out, they may find that they no longer need the land.

Cemeteries rarely move or get developed, but it does happen occasionally. Neither Haym Solomon nor Philadelphia Memorial Park appear to be filled to capacity. If demand for traditional burials declines, or the institutions face financial troubles, they could be tempted to subdivide and sell unoccupied portions of the land.

Finally, interest in golf is declining nationwide. Many courses are failing financially, and municipal courses are being converted to more traditional parks. It appears that the Chester Valley Country Club is doing fine, but the Township should engage in conversations to build a relationship, so that if the club does falter in the future, the Township may be able to seize the opportunity.
OPEN SPACE CONSERVATION
CRITERIA and GUIDELINES

Considering how little land is left in East Whiteland Township to be conserved, it's easy to assume that the Township should conserve every parcel it possibly can. However, the Township still must act in a manner that is fiscally responsible and pursue conservation opportunities which will advance the goals of this plan. When an opportunity arises to pursue conservation of a property which is not specifically described above, the Township should engage in robust conversation around established criteria and guidelines as they apply to the subject parcel. In some communities it makes sense to establish criteria which result in a ranked order of priority parcels. However, due to the limited availability of land, East Whiteland’s conservation efforts may be more opportunistic, based more on current availability, willing landowners, and available funding. Therefore, the following criteria should be applied as guiding information, rather than as a ranking system. The following criteria are also included as a worksheet attached to this plan as Appendix I.

When considering a parcel for conservation, the Township may wish to consider the following:

1. **How big is the parcel being considered for conservation?**

   In East Whiteland, size may not always be a determining factor, as few very large parcels are left. However, if a parcel is deemed an important conservation priority, but is less than 10 acres in size, it may affect available funding. Smaller parcels may need to be bundled together as a single conservation project.

2. **Is the property available for sale and how willing are the landowners to sell or agree to an easement?**

   A willing landowner is necessary for any means of conservation to move forward. The Township, specifically the OSRB, should attempt to engage in discussions with landowners to determine their willingness and focus their efforts where landowners are most interested in conservation. The OSRB should also provide information about conservation to landowners. They must also remember that this can be a long process, as it often requires significant outreach over a long time before a landowner may agree to conserve their property.

3. **Does conservation of this parcel protect Exceptional Value or High Quality streams, their headwaters or floodplains?**

   Valley Creek is designated as an Exceptional Value (EV) stream and Ridley Creek is designated as a High Quality (HQ) stream. Protection of these clean water resources is especially important in a suburbanized community, as continued development could lead to degradation or loss of the EV and HQ designations. Conserving water quality in these streams also reduces the Township’s financial obligations under the MS4 program.

4. **Does conservation of this parcel fill a geographical gap in the parks and recreation system, as shown on the Parks and Walkability map included in this plan?**

   Ideally, every resident would be able to reach a park within only a 15-minute walk. Portions of the township are completely isolated from parks and recreation features. More parks in these isolated areas would provide better access for these residents.

5. **Is the parcel a suitable site for a community park?**

   The facilities analysis chapter of this plan identifies the need for another community
park, of at least 30 acres in size, but preferably even larger. A site which features a mix of wooded slopes, streams and other natural features, with flat open areas, would be ideal for a community park.

6. Does conservation of this parcel expand an existing park or improve access to an existing park?

As there are few opportunities to conserve large parcels for creation of new parks, expansion of the existing parks may be the best method for providing additional parks and recreation opportunities.

7. Does conservation of this parcel advance the Township wide trail system?

Chapter 5 of this plan, in addition to the Township Comprehensive Plan and numerous other studies, makes recommendations for implementing trails throughout the Township. Trails can often be coupled with land conservation, by establishing trail easements on protected lands.

8. Is the parcel adjacent to a currently protected parcel, a school or a parcel owned by the school district?

Natural resources most effectively provide habitat and ecosystem services such as stormwater management when they exist as large, unfragmented patches. Therefore, conserving properties which are adjacent to or contain contiguous natural resources should be a priority. Conservation of contiguous properties can also provide for connected trails and greenways. Preserved land adjacent to schools can provide benefits, including educational opportunities focused on natural resources, trails leading to the school and providing some buffer between school properties and near neighbors.

9. Is the parcel environmentally ready to host recreational activities?

PADEP requires that parcels to be utilized for recreational end-uses must meet the same cleanup criteria as sites that are being proposed for residential end-uses. The OSRB should determine if a parcel is environmentally ready to host recreational activities. If it is not, investigations should be conducted to determine whether the parcel can be remediated in a cost-effective manner to support recreational activities. Some of the identified priority parcels present more complicated pathways to recreational redevelopment because they may have to be remediated before they can be redeveloped for recreational end-uses. More detailed strategies have been prepared for these parcels and included in Appendix A.

10. Does the parcel contain natural resources such as woodlands, specimen trees, wetlands or steep slopes?

Natural resources provide important ecosystem services like stormwater management, carbon sequestration and air purification, as well as providing habitat for native animals and recreation opportunities for people. Additionally, they provide beauty and scenic character.

11. Does the parcel contain, or have the potential to contain a significant, threatened, rare or endangered plant or animal species as indicated by a PNDI review?

The Pennsylvania Natural Diversity Inventory is an online service which identifies sites which may be home to rare, threatened or endangered species. The service charges a fee (currently $40) to assess a site, nearly instantly online. The OSRB should consider the results and whether identified species would
necessitate conservation, or conversely, whether identified species, such as bog turtles, would essentially make the site undevelopable, and essentially conserved without any further action or spending.

12. Does the parcel contain a Class I, II or III historical resource? Or another culturally significant resource?

The OSRB should work with the Township Historical Commission to determine whether historic resources on potential conservation sites would warrant protection. A historic resource may make conservation a higher priority, or otherwise affect the method and means of conservation.

13. Does conservation of the parcel protect agriculture or encourage its continuation?

There are few agricultural parcels remaining in East Whiteland, so conservation of the remaining agricultural lands may be important. However, if agriculture is no longer viable in the region, it may make less sense to preserve smaller agricultural parcels.

14. Is the parcel under threat of development? If it were to be developed, how many units would it support? Would the current zoning require some of the parcel to be conserved as open space?

Development of a parcel may be acceptable if the zoning ordinance requires protection of natural resources and preservation of open space (as recommended in Chapter 3 of this plan). The OSRB should consider the benefits of preserving the entire parcel using township funds, versus allowing the parcel to be developed and accepting the outcomes, which could include open space and natural resource preservation, at no cost to the Township.

15. Is the parcel at or near a gateway to the Township? Does it hold an important scenic view?

A visitor’s first impression of the Township is made when they see the signs letting them know that they have entered East Whiteland Township. Properties at the Township boundaries which contain iconic landscapes like Immaculata’s campus, or unbroken woodlands such those near the Malvern Hunt spray field forest, or other important features, should be conserved to protect the first impression and identity of East Whiteland.

By answering these fifteen questions and engaging in robust conversation, the OSRB should be able to determine whether a parcel is worthy of conservation and how the parcel should be conserved and funded. The OSRB and Township should accept the fact that the questions may result in different answers at different points in time. By using the questions as a discussion guide, rather than as a hard-ranking system, the OSRB can assess a parcel, while still recognizing that conservation opportunities are fluid, depending on market conditions, landowner willingness and available funding.
5. A PLAN FOR TRAILS

BACKGROUND

As the Heart of Great Valley, East Whiteland Township is home to many commercial properties interspersed with well-established, residential neighborhoods. Much of the development in the township occurred in the mid-twentieth century, at a time when little emphasis was put on infrastructure for walking and biking. The existing sidewalk and trail network in the township can be described as sparse, limited, and disconnected. However, bicycle and pedestrian connections have been a focus of multiple recent township and regional planning efforts. Recently, the value of sidewalks and trails has been realized with more contemporary commercial and residential developments in the township. In particular, the township adopted ordinance amendments which require sidewalks as part of the land development process. Since the township is developed, there are relatively few opportunities for off-road trails. Therefore, this chapter focuses on trails and other infrastructure to support walking and biking, including sidewalks and on-road bicycle facilities.

East Whiteland Township benefits from the Chester Valley Trail running through the center of the township. Stretching from King of Prussia to Exton, the Chester Valley Trail (or CVT) is one of the premier regional trails in the Greater Philadelphia Region. It is a major contributing corridor of the Circuit, the Greater Philadelphia area’s regional trail network. According to trail usage counts conducted by Chester County, the CVT sees approximately 200,000 visits per year. The East Whiteland Township municipal complex and parking lot serves as a trailhead. An extension of the CVT to connect to the

The Chester Valley Trail connects to Battle of the Clouds and Down East Parks and will connect to Bacton Hill Park in the future.

Schuylkill River Trail is currently in development by Montgomery County. Future plans include extending the CVT to the western Chester County border to connect to the Enola Low Grade Trail in Lancaster County. When the CVT and Enola Low Grade Trail are complete, there will be a continuous multi-use path from Philadelphia to Harrisburg and passing through the central part of East Whiteland Township. The CVT is an anchor and asset for the township’s trail network and provides access and connections to many township parks, including Bacton Hill, Battle of the Clouds, the Township Building and Ecology Park. East Whiteland Township passed a resolution in 2017 to demonstrate their support for the regional Circuit Trails initiative. Since then, the township has worked to improve local access to the CVT by identifying potential connections, designing, and constructing local connections, and encouraging land development adjacent to the CVT to provide direct connections.
Beyond the CVT, the limited existing sidewalks and trails are located primarily within select residential communities, corporate campuses, and existing parks. In much of the township, safe connections for people to walk or bike to parks and other key destinations are absent. Retrofitting sidewalks, trails, and bicycle infrastructure is challenging given the existing development patterns in the township, though the existing Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance requires sidewalks in new developments. Through previous planning efforts, key potential trail connections have been identified. However, many of the potential connections require further feasibility evaluation and refinement.

PREVIOUS PLANNING FOR TRAILS AND MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION

Various planning documents developed by East Whiteland Township over the last decade have identified the need for improved bicycle and pedestrian connections throughout the community. Bicycle and pedestrian circulation and connectivity was identified as a priority focus area in the township’s comprehensive plan update in 2016. Additionally, East Whiteland Township has been involved with planning studies conducted by partner agencies which have identified trail improvements through and about the township. These previous plans provided a strong foundation for developing a network of connected trails and other multimodal transportation infrastructure to connect people with key destinations, including parks and open space areas. Most recently, the East Whiteland Township Multimodal Transportation Map (MTM) was adopted in 2019 as part of an update to the township’s Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) and served as the starting point for refining potential trail connections for this plan. Additional plans and studies which identify multimodal transportation opportunities in East Whiteland Township include:

- East Whiteland Township Multimodal Transportation Map (2019)
- East Whiteland Train Station Feasibility Study (2019)
- Warner Spur Multi-Use Trail Master Plan (2019)
- Great Valley Parkway Multimodal Study (2019)
- Chester Valley Trail Connections Evaluation (2018)
- Route 30 Corridor Master Plan (2018)
- Act 209 – Transportation Impact Fee Study (2018)
- East Whiteland Township Comprehensive Plan (2016)
- Patriots Path Concept Plan (2016)
- Route 29/Great Valley Multimodal Study (2014)
- Malin Road Extension Feasibility Study (2010)
- Devault Rail-Trail Feasibility Study (2014)
- Patriots Path Plan (2010)
CONNECTIONS PLANNED AND IN-DEVELOPMENT

Following the recommendations and priorities included in previous plans, the township has advanced trail connections to various stages of the development process.

- **Bryn Erin Connection to CVT** – This project involves providing an 8’ wide asphalt trail connection between the playground at the Kelmar Avenue cul-de-sac (within the Bryn Erin neighborhood of over 270 homes) and the CVT. In 2019, the township received a Regional Trails Grant for construction of this trail. Construction is underway and the connection will be paved and completed in 2020.

- **Sidley Road / Mill Lane Connection to CVT** – This project involves 0.7 miles of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure generally along Sidley Road and Mill Lane between Moores Road and the CVT. The project will connect residential neighborhoods and a major employment center to Ecology Park and the CVT. The township received a Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program grant from the Commonwealth Financing Authority for design of the improvements. The township plans to initiate the design process in 2020 and continue to pursue funding opportunities for the construction phase of the project.

- **Atwater Connection to Valley Creek Park** – The township identified the preferred alignment for an 8’ wide trail connection between Valley Creek Park and the existing trail network in the Atwater residential development (near Quarry Point Road). This connection will be part of the Patriots Path. The township is also coordinating with the Great Valley Corporate Center regarding additional trail connections to the park. Construction should begin in 2020 or 2021.

TRAILS AND MULTIMODAL FACILITY DESIGN GUIDELINES

In 2019, East Whiteland Township updated their Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance (SALDO) to include definitions and design guidelines for trails and other multimodal transportation infrastructure. The updated ordinance includes requirements and standards regulating sidewalks, crosswalks, paths, trails, bicycle lanes, shared lanes, and striped shoulders in the township. The ordinance requires sidewalks to be installed along all roadways in conjunction with any new land development. Additionally, the ordinance includes a Multimodal Transportation Map, which depicts other existing and planned infrastructure to support walking and biking.

The updated township ordinance does provide guidance for the design of the facilities. The table below summarizes the basic design requirements for the facility types identified in East Whiteland Township’s SALDO and Multimodal Transportation Map.
### Sidewalks

**Minimum Width:** 5’

**Required:** On both sides of all existing and proposed public and private streets

### Crosswalks

**Minimum Width:** 6’

**Required:** At all intersections

### Paths

**Minimum Width:** 6’

**Required:** To continue an existing path from an adjacent parcel; where identified on the MTM or by Township Engineer

### Multi-Use Trails

**Minimum Width:** 10’-12’

**Required:** To continue an existing path from an adjacent parcel; where identified on the MTM or by Township Engineer

### Bicycle Lanes

**Minimum Width:** 5’

**Required:** Where identified on the MTM or by Township Engineer

### Shared Lanes

**Minimum Width:** n/a

**Required:** Where identified on the MTM or by Township Engineer

### Striped Shoulders with Buffers

**Minimum Width:** Shoulder – 5’ with a 2’ buffer

**Required:** Where identified on the MTM or by Township Engineer

### Natural Path*

**Minimum Width:** 4’ -5’

**Required:** In undeveloped areas, such as stream corridors or within a wooded or vegetative area

### Neighborhood Greenway*

**Minimum Width:** not specified

**Required:** Along low volume/low speed roads where additional safety for vulnerable users is required

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*Not included in the East Whiteland Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance

For the purposes of this plan, two additional facility types have been identified and are identified on the Trails and Multimodal Connections Map.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Facility</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Natural Path</td>
<td>A path that is typically 4’ – 6’ wide with a natural surface, such as grass, wood chips, or dirt. The path can be delineated by landscaped (mowed) paths and/or trail blazing markers. Natural paths are appropriate for undeveloped areas, such as along a stream corridor or within a wooded or vegetated area. Natural paths provide recreational opportunities for walking and hiking. Maintenance is a key concern for natural surface trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood Greenway</td>
<td>A shared roadway with specific design treatments to decrease traffic volumes and speeds to provide a safer and more comfortable environment for walking and biking. The roadway design prioritizes people over cars and trucks. The design treatments can include a combination of traffic calming, signage, and pavement markings to slow traffic and warn drivers that people may be walking or biking on the roadway.</td>
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**KEY DESTINATIONS AND FOCUS CORRIDORS**

The key recreation and community destinations within the township consist of parks, open spaces, commercial areas, employment centers, and schools. This plan envisions these destinations connected by a multimodal network that enables residents to travel without the use of an automobile. The multimodal network would also provide regional connections and promote use of trails for recreation including walking, running, and biking. This network is depicted on the Trails and Multimodal Connections Map (included in the Maps section of this plan), and includes a variety of trails, paths, sidewalks, and on-road transportation infrastructure that will allow people to safely move about the township.

The Trails and Multimodal Connections Map was initially based on the *East Whiteland Township Multimodal Transportation Map*, which was adopted in September 2019. Based on public input, several potential connections and areas of the township were identified and evaluated further. The evaluation was focused on key potential connections between residential neighborhoods and existing park and
recreation facilities. Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in these areas would expand non-vehicular access to existing parks and potentially create new recreational facilities, such as trails. The map presents a vision for East Whiteland Township’s trail network. Additional evaluation of feasibility and engineering may be required before some of the connections can be constructed. The network will be implemented over time, based on needs, available resources, and land development activity. The focus area evaluations are summarized below:

Valley Creek Corridor

The Multimodal Transportation Map included a multi-use trail along Valley Creek, to provide a potential connection between Valley Creek Park, Ecology Park, and the CVT using the planned trail along Mill Lane. Based on public input, there were questions and concerns regarding the proposed trail width, surface, and alignment, particularly between Old Morehall Road and Mill Lane.

The Knickerbocker Tract, which includes several parcels between Mill Lane, Lapp Road, and Old Morehall Road, is a former landfill site that is now privately owned and generally undeveloped. There is the potential for the Knickerbocker Tract to be developed in the future and a developer submitted a concept plan to the township in 2019. To the west of the Knickerbocker Tract, the township owns and maintains a service road that provide access to Mill Lane for several parcels. (Without the service road, the parcels would be land locked.) Today, the service road is a level grass area approximately 25’ wide, and it is used occasionally by the property owners for access to their properties.

Based on preliminary evaluation, the proposed multi-use trail (8’ to 10’ wide) following Valley Creek presents concerns in terms of both feasibility and suitability. Valley Creek has an Exceptional Value stream designation from Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and building a paved trail could negatively impact the stream and floodplain. Additionally, a paved multi-use trail might not be appropriate for preserving a natural setting for the stream. Therefore, the proposed trail following the creek corridor was changed to a natural surface path that would be less impactful, but still support recreation and access to enjoy the natural beauty of the creek corridor. The potential alignment and marking of the path will require further evaluation.

In addition to the natural path, there is a need to provide a multi-modal connection between Old Morehall Road and Mill Lane to connect key recreational resources in the township. A general alignment for a multi-use trail north of Valley Creek is shown on the Trails and Multimodal Connections Map. The feasibility and specific alignment of this connection requires further evaluation.

The designation of the natural surface path and design of the multi-use trail should be done in conjunction with any proposed development of the Knickerbocker Tract. Additionally, further feasibility evaluation and development of design solutions will be required for the segment along the service road to Mill Lane. In particular, the design treatment for the service road segment must maintain vehicular access to the private properties while providing a safe route for walking and/or biking. The design process should include coordination with adjacent property owners. The design will also need to address the crossing of Mill Lane and connection to the Sidley Road/Mill Lane connection proposed on the west side of the road.
Lapp Road Corridor

The Lapp Road corridor was evaluated as a near-term option for connecting Valley Creek Park and the Great Valley Corporate Center with Ecology Park and the CVT via the planned trail along Sidley Road/Mill Lane. At the eastern end, the township owns the former roadway right-of-way for Lapp Road, which could be used for an off-road trail connection between Technology Drive and Wilburdale Road. There was evidence of informal “social paths,” which indicate that people are effectively utilizing this right-of-way as a walking path, today. Lapp Road between Wilburdale Road and Dale Lane is quite narrow (approximately 20’) with a speed limit of 25 miles per hour. Due to steep embankments, mature trees, utility poles, and numerous residential driveways, providing an off-road trail within this area would be challenging and impactful. Given these constraints, the application of a “Neighborhood Greenway” was identified for this stretch of Lapp Road. “Neighborhood Greenways” are low-volume, low-speed roads that incorporate traffic calming, signage, and pavement markings to alert drivers to share the roadway with vulnerable users, such as pedestrians and bicyclists. Traffic calming measures will be important to slow traffic and create a safe and comfortable environment for bicyclists and pedestrians to share the road with motorists.

West of Dale Lane and along the frontage of the Fetters Mill neighborhood, there is an existing five-foot wide asphalt path on the north side of Lapp Road. Extending this off-road path approximately 400’ to the intersection of Mill Lane and Sidley Road would require coordination with one impacted property owner. Additional pedestrian accommodations, such as crosswalks, at the intersection would be needed to fully integrate with the Sidley Road/Mill Lane Trail connection currently being developed by the township. The planned facilities along Lapp Road can be implemented in a phase approach.

South of Route 30 and Active Rail Lines

Amtrak’s Keystone Corridor and Norfolk Southern’s Trenton Cut-off rail lines travel east-west through the township, generally south of Route 30. The rail lines are a barrier for north-south circulation in the township today, including for bicyclists and pedestrians. Few crossings exist, and even these are constrained and difficult for bicyclists and pedestrians to reach. As a result, residential neighborhoods south of the rail lines, as well as the Immaculata University campus, are somewhat isolated and...
cut-off from key destinations and recreational resources north of the rail lines. Residents in this area have expressed an interest having the ability to walk or bike to Route 30, the CVT, and east to the Borough of Malvern. As a result, the area of the township south of Route 30 was evaluated further for potential rail line crossings and east-west connections, particularly between Immaculata University and the Borough of Malvern. The following potential connections and crossing of the rail lines were evaluated.

- **Rail Line Crossings:** As documented in the East Whiteland Train Station Feasibility Study, there is an existing pedestrian underpass (under Amtrak’s Keystone Corridor) just east of Route 352. The tunnel provided cross track circulation for the former Frazer Train Station. The tunnel is still intact, but it is now sealed. This tunnel could be opened and upgraded to support pedestrian access across the rail lines. Opening the underpass would require coordination with Amtrak and possibly SEPTA, which operates the Paoli-Thorndale regional rail service on Amtrak’s rail lines. Additionally, it would require connecting facilities along the Route 352 corridor and/or Frazer Road.

There is also an existing tunnel for a former public road under the Amtrak rail line near the intersection of Oak Hill Circle and Summit Road. This tunnel could support a trail connection between Summit Road and S. Malin Road. South of the tunnel is a township-owned property and several nearby single-family homes. The township has a sanitary sewer easement through the tunnel. In addition to the sewer line, there are one or more gas lines that run through the tunnel. The tunnel does show extensive water percolation through its stone/masonry arch structure, indicating the potential need for structure repairs. Providing trail connections to the north or south could be challenging and costly due to topography, utilities, and required coordination with Amtrak and the Buckeye Terminal facility. Opportunities to use the tunnel for a future trail should be monitored as a longer-term solution to the north-south connectivity issues.

Possibly the most viable crossing and connection is between S. Malin Road (where there is an existing underpass of the Norfolk Southern rail line) the end of Village Way. This connection should be planned and considered further, in conjunction with any potential development of the nearby Bishop Tube site.

- **East-West Connections to Malvern:** Due to existing development patterns and the roadway network, Summit Road and King Road are the only two corridors that could potentially provide an east-west oriented connection between the established residential neighborhoods and key destinations south of the Route 30, such as Immaculata University, Malvern Borough, and recreational resources in Malvern Borough or Willistown Township. Also, there are not any options for an off-road...
The Summit Road corridor was evaluated, but is not suitable for an on-road or off-road bicycle or pedestrian facility due to the narrow width, traffic volumes and speeds, and existing roadside features. King Road is wider (with limited shoulders in some areas) and provides a more direct route, particularly for cycling. The Trails and Multimodal Connections Map includes bike lanes on King Road between Malvern Borough and Route 352 and a striped shoulder between Route 352 and Frazer Road. This connection requires further evaluation, particularly in the area of the Route 352 intersection. (The bike lanes will likely need to terminate and transition to a shared lane facility east of Route 352.) Additionally, this connection requires coordination with PennDOT, as the owner of King Road, and neighboring East Goshen and Willistown Townships to complete the connection to Malvern Borough.

STRATEGIES

Connecting residents and people who work in the township to recreational opportunities is a priority for East Whiteland Township. Summarized below are strategies to achieve this goal of developing a connected trail and multi-modal network in the township. For each strategy, there are priority trail projects and key action items to implement the priority projects are summarized.

1. **Continue to implement existing trail plans.**

   East Whiteland Township has been proactively planning trail connections over the past decade. The township should focus on implementation of the existing trail plans and priority projects identified in previous plans. Additionally, East Whiteland Township should remain actively involved and support planned regional trail connections, including the Patriots Path, Devault Trail, and Warner Spur.

2. **Plan for and implement trail connections between existing neighborhoods and key destinations.**

   This plan identifies local connections that would allow residents to access recreational resources and move about the township without the use of an automobile. East Whiteland Township should focus on advancing design and implementation of these priority connections to serve residential communities.

3. **Enhance access and use of the Chester Valley Trail.**

   The Chester Valley Trail is the primary recreational and active transportation corridor passing through East Whiteland Township. It provides access and connections to several existing park and recreation areas. As such, improving connections to this asset by making it easier to access without the use of an automobile is a primary goal of East Whiteland Township. Various projects are already in the works and should remain the primary focus. The township building parking lot serves as a trailhead for the CVT. This has been a tremendous asset for the community. However, dedicated trailhead facilities would enhance the user experience.

4. **Promote bicycle and pedestrian connections along the township’s main corridors.**

   Two of the major arterial highway corridors in East Whiteland Township have very limited active transportation connections. Improving conditions for people walking and biking along (and crossing) these
corridors was identified as a priority in the East Whiteland Township Comprehensive Plan and further studied in additional studies and is reflected in the township’s Multimodal Transportation Map.

- Route 30 – The Route 30 Corridor Master Plan identified the preferred typical section and additional bicycle and pedestrian connections to the area surrounding Route 30. The Master Plan looks to “Reimagine Frazer” into a walkable corridor with village nodes that support active lifestyles and de-emphasize the need for automobiles in the township. The township is taking a phased approach to implementing this vision; starting with requiring new development in the corridor build the preferred cross section.

- Route 29 – The Route 29 Multimodal Study, completed by TMACC, identified the need for a trail along Route 29 to serve the active transportation needs of the Great Valley Corporate Center.

5. Plan for access to future parks and open space areas.

As future parks and open space areas are established, the township should plan for and evaluate opportunities to provide trail and multi-modal connections to these areas. Where Township funds or other public funding are used to protect privately owned lands with conservation easements, trail easements should be layered on or established alongside the conservation easements, to permit public trails through the preserved properties. The township should also update the SALDO ordinance to incorporate revisions and refinements to the East Whiteland Township Multimodal Transportation Map, including those revisions identified in this plan.

6. Plan for maintenance of bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure

Infrastructure for walking and biking requires routine and ongoing maintenance. Some maintenance activities are related to changes in seasonal conditions, such as clearing snow and ice or overgrown vegetation. Additionally, sidewalks, paths and trails may require minor, periodic repairs, such as crack filling or patching, and occasionally full replacement. On-road bicycle facilities may require replacement of pavement markings and signs. The township should consider adopting policies to address routine maintenance for infrastructure on township property, as well as other publicly accessible bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in the township. The policies should identify maintenance responsibilities and address snow and ice removal, as well as clearing vegetation or other obstructions.

In particular, the township should develop a policy regarding the winter maintenance of paths and trails within township owned parks and open space areas. The policy should consider the connectivity and potential use of paths and trails. Winter maintenance may be appropriate for select paths and trails on township owned properties that provide connections to the regional trail network or to other key destinations. In some locations, it may be beneficial to allow paths and trails to remain snow covered for winter recreational activities, as well as reduced maintenance costs.

The township should also continue to budget for maintenance and repairs to bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This will become even more critical as new infrastructure is constructed.
## Trail Plan Prioritized Strategies

### Existing Trail Plans Priority Projects

| Patriots Path Connector | The Patriots Path is a system of sidewalks, paths, and trails that connect historic sites that played a role in the Revolutionary War. In East Whiteland Township, the Valley Creek Segment and Malvern Segment connect Valley Creek Park and Malvern Borough to the Chester Valley Trail along Route 29, Route 30, and Old Lincoln Highway. East Whiteland Township prepared a concept plan for a sidewalk connection from Old Lincoln Highway to Route 29 along the north side of Route 30. | For the Route 30 segment between Old Lincoln Highway and Route 29:  
- Coordinate with Norfolk Southern regarding potential right-of-way  
- Identify funding and advance design and construction |
| Devault Rail-Trail | In 2015, Charlestown Township studied the feasibility of converting the former Devault Rail Line into a multi-use trail between Great Valley and the Borough of Phoenixville. This corridor extends into East Whiteland Township, and it could make a connection to the Chester Valley Trail near Bacton Hill Road. | • Initiate feasibility study for converting the former Devault Rail Line into a trail within East Whiteland Township |

### Key Destinations Priority Projects

| Valley Creek Park Connections | The Township has actively worked with property owners to create trail connections between Valley Creek Park, Atwater and the Great Valley Corporate Center. | • Coordinate with property owners and stakeholders to design and implement the connections. |
| King Road Bike Lanes | Bike lanes and a striped shoulder along King Road would provide a connection into Malvern Borough, which is a major destination for residents especially in the southern part of East Whiteland Township. | • Engage with East Goshen and Willistown Townships to establish a coordinated effort  
• Encourage Chester County Planning Commission and PennDOT to install bike lanes along King Road as part of a future resurfacing or improvement project |
| Route 352 and Amtrak Pedestrian Underpass | Connecting to Route 30 is key to creating a village center in Frazer and connecting to other recreation opportunities. Amtrak’s Keystone Corridor rail line is a major barrier. A pedestrian underpass exists as a remnant of a former railroad station near Sproul Road. | • Coordinate with Amtrak about opening and reactivating pedestrian underpass (east of Route 352) |
## Chester Valley Trail Priority Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bryn Erin Connection</strong></td>
<td>In 2019, East Whiteland Township received grant funding to complete a trail connection between Kelmar Ave and the Chester Valley Trail.</td>
<td>Construction anticipated to begin in Spring 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sidley Road Connection</strong></td>
<td>In 2019, East Whiteland Township received grant funding to advance the design of a multimodal connection between Moores Road and the Chester Valley Trail along Sidley Road and Mill Lane. This facility will utilize a mix of off-road, multi-use trails, existing sidewalks, and improved shoulders.</td>
<td>Initiate and complete design, Pursue grant funding and budget township funds for construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Route 30 via Westgate and KD Markley</strong></td>
<td>There is an established “social path” connection between Westgate Village Apartment and KD Markley Elementary School. Additionally, Great Valley School District owns a large parcel of land between Swedesford Road (across from KD Markley Elementary School) and the Chester Valley Trail. The Route 30 Master Plan identified utilizing these parcels to create a trail connection between Route 30 and the Chester Valley Trail.</td>
<td>Coordinate with Great Valley School District and Westgate Village Apartments, Initiate a feasibility study for establishing this trail connection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Trailhead Facilities</strong></td>
<td>The Township Building currently serves as a trailhead facility for the CVT. However, the Township Building is not an ideal facility due to hours of operation, security, and use.</td>
<td>Continue to coordinate with Chester County and other partners on the design and construction of a separate trailhead facility, including restrooms and water fountain.</td>
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## Route 29 Priority Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Rte 29 Crossing (near Valley Creek &amp; Great Valley Parkway)</strong></td>
<td>Providing a safe pedestrian crossing of Route 29 would open more opportunities for people to enjoy Valley Creek Park or to make future connections to the Devault Line and/or Warner Spur rail-trails.</td>
<td>Evaluate potential locations and design treatments for the crossing of Route 29, Monitor and explore opportunities to provide this connection as part of future land development or redevelopment in the Great Valley Corporate Center.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Implementation and Funding Opportunities

There are a number of ways to implement the priority trail projects in East Whiteland Township. The capital improvements can be implemented as public projects led by the township or another governmental entity or a partnership between various entities. Another option is for improvements to be implemented by developers as part of land development or redevelopment projects in accordance with township policies. Properly documenting the community vision allows the township to implement improvements through the land development process. East Whiteland Township’s SALDO and *Multimodal Transportation Map* clearly document a vision of a walkable, connected community. The township should update the SALDO ordinance to be consistent with the trail connections identified in this plan and highlighted on the Trails and Multimodal Connections Map.

Identifying funding is a critical next step for many of the priority trail projects. Given the scope and scale of the improvements, the township may want to seek grant funding for additional planning, design or construction. The table in Appendix L summarizes competitive grant programs for trails and other multimodal connections. Each grant program has different eligible projects, matching requirements, and timelines for implementation. Grant programs typically require the project sponsor to provide some level matching fund. By utilizing local funds to leverage grant funding, East Whiteland Township can fill the gaps in the existing sidewalk and trail network.
6. PARK SYSTEM & FACILITIES ASSESSMENTS

OVERVIEW

East Whiteland Township features eleven parks varying in size from the pocket parks in the Bryn Erin neighborhood, to the 30 plus acre Valley Creek Park. The parks offer a variety of themes, activities and amenities, including historical features, walking paths, gathering spaces and formal sports fields. Many of the parks connect directly, or nearby, to the Chester Valley Trail, which allows more residents to reach the parks on foot or by bicycle. However, the system of highways and railroads which cross the Township make it difficult for many residents to safely walk to parks. The 11 parks contain approximately 100 acres of land, though some of that acreage is occupied by non-recreational uses, such as stormwater basins or Township buildings and facilities. As explained in detail above, 100 acres will not adequately serve East Whiteland’s growing and changing population.

STRENGTHS

The park and recreation system’s greatest strengths are:

- A variety of facilities, amenities and types of parks;
- A mix of active and passive recreation opportunities; and,
- Connections to Chester Valley Trail.

The park system features most of the traditional elements, such as nature paths, sports fields, playgrounds and pavilions. Residents can typically find a park which offers the type of recreation they are looking for. Valley Creek Park is well loved and well used for various activities, including tennis, concerts, fishing and simply enjoying the outdoors. Battle of the

The park system features small parks, like the pocket playgrounds in the Bryn Erin community (top) and larger parks, like Valley Creek Park (bottom).

Clouds Park is primarily devoted to organized sports, but also features playgrounds, pavilions and an entrance to the Chester Valley Trail. Ecology Park is aptly named, as it is focused on nature, with a loop path through woodlands and over Valley Creek, as its primary amenity. Smaller parks, including Down East, Whiteland Farm, and Spring Mill Parks, and the Bryn Erin tot lots, provide close to home recreation opportunities. Gunkel Spring Mill preserves a piece of the Township’s history while offering educational and interpretational opportunities. These amenities and features provide residents with many different recreational opportunities.
CHALLENGES

The park and recreation system's greatest challenges are:

- A need for an additional 80 acres to establish a community park;
- Meeting the growing maintenance and investment needs while remaining fiscally responsible;
- Providing parks and facilities to address geographical gaps where available land is scarce, especially in the southwestern portion of the Township;
- Updating parks to provide multiple uses; and
- Updating the parks to serve more diverse users.

East Whiteland Township’s population is growing and changing. As the population evolves, so too must the park and recreation system, in order to meet changing needs and wants. The Township needs to acquire more land to provide another community park. As detailed in the Open Space chapter of this plan, there are few opportunities to acquire such a large parcel. The Township must work to acquire land or develop partnerships with landowners to gain access to the necessary acreage.

While the overall park and recreation system provides a variety of amenities and facilities, many of the individual parks do not. The best parks accommodate groups which include different users, like families. Many generations of a family may visit a park together but may not necessarily want to do the same thing once they are there. For instance, a child may need to attend soccer practice. A younger sibling may need a playground or other facility to entertain them. The parents may use a pavilion to read or work on a laptop while grandparents use a walking path for exercise. Few parks can accommodate all of these users at once. East Whiteland Parks and Recreation Commission understands the need to provide diverse opportunities within the parks, as they have continually provided new playgrounds alongside other existing uses. This effort can be expanded to include more walking paths and gathering spaces such as benches, tables and pavilions.

As the population grows and changes, the Township will need to consider adding new amenities to the parks and recreation system, which it currently lacks. As some residents age, they will need facilities for senior friendly activities, such as pickleball courts, walking paths, and gaming tables. Young families may want splash pads and more modern playgrounds, accessible to people with differing abilities. Residents with diverse heritages and cultures may wish to see facilities for other sports, such as cricket. And people of all ages and backgrounds could use a dog park, especially those living in dense communities with small lots.
East Whiteland Township has opportunities to continue building on their strengths and meeting their challenges. The Township continues to develop parks the right way, through master planning and public discourse. This plan will help guide that process. The Township is currently planning and designing Bacton Hill Park, which can accommodate many of the uses which the park and recreation system currently lacks. The Township also continues to connect more communities to the Chester Valley Trail. These connections provide the community with better access to many of the parks. And finally, many of the parks, guided by the Strategies for Improvement below, can be upgraded or retrofit to meet the needs of a more diverse and multi-generational population, improve safety and increase community involvement.

**Strategies for Improvement of the Parks and Recreation System**

1. **Prepare master plans to guide major improvements and future development of the parks.** The Township is continually faced with decisions regarding park improvements, upgrades and funding opportunities. When opportunities arise, the Township should be well positioned to easily determine which opportunities to pursue. Master plans will guide future development of the parks, whether that development is a major overhaul, or gradual improvements. Master plans can ensure that the parks are developed and improved in a way that results in attractive, cohesive designs which meet current standards for safety and accessibility and build upon the park’s strengths. Public
funds such as grants are often used to prepare master plans and may require additional measures, but at a minimum, the master plan process should include:

- Coordination with the Parks and Recreation Board, which may include attendance at their meetings.
- Two public meetings- one to collect public input to inform the design of the park and one to collect feedback on the design.
- Interaction with stakeholders through key person interviews, focus groups, site walks or other facilitated meetings. Stakeholders may include near neighbors, clubs, sports leagues, groups of potential park users with common interests or others.

2. **Assess the existing playgrounds for conformity with current safety requirements.** The Township should contract with a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) to assess the playgrounds in all parks for conformity with current Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines. These guidelines relate to fall zones, equipment safety, separation distances and acceptable materials. The Township should keep records of these inspections on file for at least 20 years.

3. **Implement products, programs and policies which will ensure the parks remain safe.** Rapidly changing technology has provided an array of products intended to keep us safer. The Township should stay up to date on evolving safety products which may be useful in the parks. These could include wi-fi enabled security cameras, GPS location points, call boxes and cell phone apps for reporting issues. The parks are safe do not need any major safety related interventions, but it is best practice to keep up with current technology, plan for its implementation during the master planning stage and on an as needed basis.
4. **Establish a Township Shade Tree Commission**, including a group of certified Tree Tenders, to help the Township plant, maintain and manage the trees within the parks and other township owned properties. Shade Tree Commissions are volunteer based organizations. Like the Planning Commission, they are advisory to the Board of Supervisors. Shade Tree Commissions can play different roles in different communities. In some places, the Shade Tree Commission provides an official review of subdivision and land development plans and comments on tree removal and proposed plantings. In other communities, they organize tree plantings, educational events and volunteer maintenance programs. Shade Tree Commissions and Certified Tree Tenders can also make a township eligible for TreeVitalize and other grant funding opportunities. In East Whiteland, a Shade Tree Commission could help the township plan for planting and maintenance of trees within the parks. The Shade Tree Commission could be established as a subset of the Parks and Recreation Board.

5. **Provide improvements which align with the goals and recommendations of the International Dark-Skies Association.** New lighting should follow the guidelines for Outdoor Lighting Basics, found on the IDSA website, [www.darksky.org](http://www.darksky.org). These guidelines state that lighting should:

- Only be on when needed
- Only light the area that needs it
- Be no brighter than necessary
- Minimize blue light emissions
- Be fully shielded (pointing downward)

By following these guidelines, the township can set an example for providing adequate and safe lighting which is sensitive to wildlife, human health, energy consumption, natural beauty and cultural heritage. Additionally, this would follow the recommendations for dark sky sensitive lighting included in the Federation of Northern Chester County Communities Regional Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.

6. **Provide bike related amenities at all the parks.** The Township has already undertaken many trail planning and construction projects. The Chester Valley Trail also provides a bicycle friendly trail crossing the entire township. With the addition of more trails, cycling will become

*More bicycle related amenities, including trail connections, will make it easier and safer for residents to bike to the parks.*
a more viable option for reaching the parks. Therefore, the township should provide bike related amenities at all the parks. These may include pumps, fixit stations, racks or other dedicated bike parking areas.

7. **Establish and mark the park boundaries.**  
Many of the township parks’ boundaries are not clearly marked. This can lead to trespassing and other issues. Park visitors may inadvertently wander out of the parks and onto private properties. Neighbors may encroach onto township property with fences, sheds or dumping areas. The park boundaries should be marked at entrances and clearly established along property lines through signage, plantings and fencing, as deemed appropriate at each site. Trespassing and encroachments are not currently a major issue. However, the Township should inspect the park boundaries annually (or more frequently) to identify any issues before they become major problems.

8. **Establish a memorial and gift policy for the Township.** While gifts and memorials may enrich a park experience for park users, Township parks and open space are very precious commodities. East Whiteland Township parks offer a community setting for visitors to encounter a wide range of experiences. It is the responsibility of the Township to preserve the open, tranquil quality of the Township’s parks. Therefore, a memorial policy should ensure that the limited open space available and used for park improvements will support the mission of the parks and recreation system. A thoughtful review process should be provided to encourage gifts and donations that:

- Cover the total cost of a project;
- Are sensitive to all park users;
- Are sensitive to the design standards required for public spaces;
- Are sensitive to the long-term cost of maintenance and the distribution of maintenance money;
- Strongly encourage or require maintenance endowments;
- Include a public participation process in the planning stages;
- Help to implement the Township’s Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan.

The type of gifts and/or memorials that would be considered most acceptable by this policy include:

- Traditional park amenities and facilities that would contribute to East
Whiteland Township’s system of parks & recreation.

- Public art of the highest quality that has been approved by the Parks and Recreation Board and the Board of Supervisors.
- Other to be determined.

9. **Conduct hazard tree assessments.** The township should conduct hazard tree assessments in all the parks on a yearly basis, and as needed after major weather events. The assessment should be conducted by an arborist, forester or similarly qualified professional. The assessments would identify and examine trees which could pose a hazard to park visitors or property, such as parked cars or neighboring buildings. Trees deemed to be hazardous should then be removed.

Many of the mature trees within the township parks are Ash. Ash is an important native tree species which has historically been a major component of Pennsylvania’s forests. However, over the course of the past decade, an invasive beetle from Asia, the emerald ash borer, has decimated the Ash population, killing mature trees where they stand. Most of the Ash trees in our region are infested with emerald ash borers, evident by dying crowns and D shaped holes in the trunks. Soon, all the ash trees in the parks will die, leaving hazardous, standing dead trees.

10. **Provide signs throughout the park in accordance with a Township wide signage system.** Signs should be placed at the park entrances and at park features, displaying rules and regulations, interpretative information, hours, and other pertinent information. Distance markers and wayfinding signs could also be posted on trails and walkways.

All the Township parks, trails and open spaces should feature consistent, professionally designed and fabricated signs. In many communities, signage is addressed on an as-needed basis, leading to an uncoordinated, mismatched display of signs of different colors, fonts, shapes, and sizes. While the signs typically do the job of displaying information, the mismatched display is not very pleasing to the eye. It also demonstrates a lack of planning. A unified signage system should convey the necessary information but do so in an aesthetically pleasing manner. Signage should be consistent in colors, fonts, size, and messaging. The signage should use the Township’s logo and colors and clearly identify Township owned lands. Signage
should display important information such as the name of the park or facility, rules and regulations, directions, interpretative and educational information. Signs should also help visitors identify their location in case of emergency.

A well designed and constructed signage system helps to brand the Township identity, gives a presence to the parks, and commands respect. It also demonstrates the size and extent of the Township parks and recreation system. Once a signage system is created, it can be phased in over time, such as when improvements are made in each park.

A professionally designed and fabricated signage system can better convey messaging to the residents and present a better image of how the parks are managed.
Valley Creek Park

Snapshot

Type: Township Park
Location: 361 Morehall Road
Size: 32.2 Acres
Uses: Active and Passive
Facilities: Parking – 105 spaces
plus four HC Bathrooms
Tennant house
Spring house
Walking trails
Fishing deck
Multiple playgrounds
Benches and tables
Two pavilions
Amphitheater
Four tennis courts

Natural Resources: Valley Creek
Woodlands
Mature trees

Overview

Valley Creek Park offers residents a variety of facilities in the Township’s only true community park. It offers connections to nature through walking paths, nature trails and the fishing pier. Athletes can play tennis. Kids can use the variety of playground equipment while their parents relax in the shade of a pavilion. The park also features a pavilion with hillside seating, where concerts and other programs take place. The north side of the park has a more active feel, with the tennis courts, parking lot and amphitheater providing the action. The southern side of the park, with the historic building as a backdrop, has a more passive character.

Strategies for Improvement

Buffer the Valley Creek to help protect its Exceptional Value waters designation. This designation signifies that Valley Creek has some of the best water quality in Pennsylvania. Additionally, Valley and Little Valley Creeks are the only two streams in Chester County included in the PA Fish and Boat commission’s 2019 list of Class A Wild Trout waters. This designation signifies that these streams support a population of naturally produced trout of sufficient size and abundance to support a long-term and rewarding sport fishery. The water quality of Valley Creek is important for fish, other wildlife and for recreational fishing.
The Township should install planted buffers within 100’ feet of the banks of the creek. Trees planted in these buffers will help protect water quality by slowing the flow of runoff and filtering sediment before it reaches the creek. Trees would also help to soak up stormwater before it reaches the creek. The trees planted closest to the creek would also provide shade, which would help keep the water cool. Trout depend on cold water, so shade is vital to their survival. Roots reaching into the creek, fallen trunks and branch debris also provide habitat, hiding and hunting grounds for trout. Providing buffers along the creek would protect water quality, manage stormwater, help the trout and beautify the park.

**Determine and implement a new use for the house.** Buildings, especially old ones, can be expensive to maintain. Therefore, if the Township wishes to keep the building, a new use should be determined and established. Any new use will likely require some investment into upgrading the building to modern standards, meeting current fire, safety and other code requirements and performing any deferred maintenance. Considering that the Township is losing the rental income and will likely need to spend to improve the building, a use which could generate revenue would be ideal. These could include offices for rent, a rental space for residents, a contracted space for use by a camp or similar program, or a café or snack bar. Other uses could include an indoor play space for park visitors or township staff offices.

**Prepare a landscape plan to guide further beautification, land and water stewardship and tree replacement.** All the Township’s parks should have a landscape plan to guide planting projects and to act as an inventory to guide replacement as trees in the parks die and are removed. Landscape plans should be prepared by a registered landscape architect and should provide a cohesive plant palette, employing native species consistent with those growing naturally in surrounding areas. At Valley Creek Park, the following areas should be specifically addressed:

- **Buffering from Rt. 29:** The area between the main parking area and Route 29 should be planted with trees and shrubs to visually separate the park from the busy road. Plantings here would help to beautify the park and the parking area.
• Shade Trees for Playgrounds – Trees should be planted to provide shade to the playgrounds. Shade would make the playgrounds more enjoyable for children and caretakers. Shade could also prolong the life of some of the equipment or their finishes, as they would no longer be in the sun all day.

• Gardens for Playgrounds – The playgrounds can be beautified with gardens which would provide color, texture, fragrance and movement. Gardens could focus on educational topics, such as habitat, stormwater management, pollination, insect lifecycles or the food chain. They could also be themed for edible or medicinal plants, or to attract birds, butterflies, or other wildlife.

• Shade Trees for Parking Areas – The main parking area features trees within the internal and corner islands, but more could be provided along the edges of the parking area as well. Similarly, the accessible spaces near the pavilions would also benefit from shading. Aside from keeping cars cool for visitors, more trees would help keep the asphalt cooler, reducing the heat island effect and improving the visitor experience. The main parking area provides most visitors with their first impression and last memory of their park experience. The parking areas should be beautified and maintained to the standards of the rest of the park.

• Shrubs for Parking Areas – The main parking area is the least attractive part of the park (as are most parking areas), but also one of the most visibly prominent. Shrubs should be planted around the parking area to provide both physical and visual separation from the rest of the park. Shrubs could be planted as a hedge, hedgerow or naturalized groupings. Shrubs would visually screen cars, beautify the parking area and help to block headlights during evening events.

• Best Management Practices – A landscape plan could also propose plantings which could act as BMP’s, which could help East Whiteland Township meet federal MS4 requirements. These could include vegetated buffers, vegetated swales and basins, establishment of meadows and other types of plantings. These BMP’s could also reduce mowing and beautify the park through additional plantings.

• Meadows – Valley Creek Park contains vast areas of mowed turf grass. Some of these areas are valuable for unprogrammed play – places for kids to run free and play as they wish. However, it doesn’t appear that all of these areas are necessary to maintain as turf. Some of them could be converted to meadows, which would beautify the park, manage stormwater, provide habitat and reduce time and fuel spent on mowing. Additionally, meadows would add a new dynamic to the park, another set of colors and textures. They would provide another setting for recreation as trails can easily be mowed around and through them.
Meadows can also be used to provide separation between park elements, helping to create rooms in the park. The area west of the bridge over Valley Creek would be ideal for installation of a meadow and a loop trail. Meadows can be established through seeding for grasses and wildflowers aimed at supporting birds, pollinators or biodiversity more broadly. They can also be created by reducing mowing and allowing the existing seed bank to grow up.

Prepare a stewardship plan and remove invasive species from the landscape areas. The woodlands at Valley Creek Park provide a nice contrast to the open areas dedicated to active recreation, playgrounds and gathering spaces. The woodlands also provide habitat for birds and other animals, control stormwater and buffer the Valley Creek. However, the health of the woodlands could be improved through stewardship planning. Like most woodlands in the area, these contain invasive species including Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*), which can overtake native species and render the woodlands as habitat dead zones. A stewardship plan would help the Township care for the woodlands and other natural resources. In the meantime, the Township should start by removing invasive species such as winged euonymous (*Euonymous elatus*) from the landscape plantings.

Improve the bathroom area. The permanent and fully functional bathroom is an important amenity at Valley Creek Park, as bathrooms are necessary in parks which feature playgrounds and areas for large gatherings. Most visitors to Valley Creek Park cannot walk to their homes, so the permanent bathroom is necessary. While it should not be an organizing feature, the bathroom may actually be too well hidden. While the building appears to be in good condition, the bathroom area is dark, hidden and uninviting. This area could be dressed up to be more lively, attractive and noticeable, with the addition of brighter paint, flowering plants in brightly colored planters, painted asphalt and more prominent signage. If the park undergoes any major redesign or improvements in the future, the Township may consider decreasing the distance between the bathrooms and the pavilion and playground areas or providing additional bathrooms.

Enhance the circulation system in the park to improve recreation and access. The trails in the park currently provide access to the important elements, but do not lend themselves well to recreational walking or to efficient circulation.

- **Create loop trails within the park** – The existing main trail weaves its way through the park, connecting the parking area, to the tennis courts, pavilion, bathroom, playgrounds and ultimately dead ends after crossing the fishing pier. This trail could be improved by providing additional segments to create loops within the park and a large loop around most of the park. New loops could be created around the southernmost grassy area and around the open area east of the fishing pier and bridge. A connector
trail could be added between the area of the bridge and the bathrooms. These new loops and connectors would provide better opportunities for recreational walking or running and would provide better connectivity between elements. Depending on the layout, it would be possible to establish ¾ to one mile of trail within the park.

- **Install a meadow path** – The landscape plan section of this assessment has recommended that the area east of the bridge, which appears to be relatively unmanaged, should be converted to a meadow. If this area becomes a meadow, it may be more appropriate to create a simple, mowed walking path around the meadow, rather than a paved surface. A mowed path would better fit the natural aesthetic of the meadow and avoid installing more impervious surfaces close to Valley Creek.

- **Formalize an agreement with Cerner Health to establish and maintain trails on their land.** Cerner Health owns and maintains natural areas and baseball fields adjacent to the park. The Township should work with Cerner to come to an agreement to permit park visitors to use trails on their property.

**Assess the current mowing schedules.** Most municipalities spend more time mowing grass than is necessary. At Valley Creek Park, some of the wide-open spaces give the park its character. However, the Township is mowing remnant areas which are not used for recreation, nor lend to the character of the park. The areas above the tennis courts and main parking area could be converted to meadow or forest. The area between the trail and Morehall Road could be managed similarly. The area between the Atwater development and the amphitheater should be reassessed once the trail is installed. Then, the mowed areas could be reduced to allow meadows or more forest to abut the trail.

**Upgrade the new playground to better meet the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.** It may not be possible to bring this playground into total compliance with the requirements of the ADA Act, but it is possible to make the playground more accessible and appealing to children of all abilities. The modern equipment could be upgraded to include attachments or additional elements which would cater to children with differing abilities. The ground surface could be replaced with an accessible surface such as poured rubber or engineered wood fiber. *(It is unclear whether the existing surface is engineered wood fiber, installed to meet specifications, or if it is just typical mulch.)* The surface should be maintained to remove uneven areas which may occur over time. Additionally, the wooden edge should be adjusted to permit an area of mulch to abut the trail, at a minimum width of 5 feet. This would create an accessible entrance,
where the wood would not be a barrier between the playground and the trail.

Provide benches and shade at the new playground. Caregivers can currently sit in the pavilion and see much of the playground. However, many caregivers will want to be closer to the children. Benches or other tables with seating should be placed closer to the equipment, or within the mulched area if they can be sited to meet safety requirements. Shade should also be provided, ideally by trees, but sails, awnings and umbrellas could also be used in the short term. These additions would make the playground space much more comfortable for caregivers and children.

Enhance the playgrounds by relocating some equipment and adding elements of whimsy and playfulness. Valley Creek Park features a modern playground, on the path from the bathroom to one pavilion. It also features older equipment, scattered across the lower end of the park. If the older equipment still meets current safety standards, it should be gathered together into a cohesive playground, with a continuous ground surface. The modern playground could be further improved by adding elements of beauty, playfulness and whimsy. These could include play elements like playhouses, landscaping for color and scent, artistic elements like sculpture or colored ground surfaces.

Add an area for nature play. With Valley Creek and the woodlands that protect it, as well as large mature trees throughout the park, Valley Creek Park could feature an area dedicated to connecting children with nature. A nature play area could range from a newly designed playground which uses natural materials, like logs and rocks as the play elements, to an area of the existing woodlands where children could be encouraged to go off trail and explore, climb trees and get into the creek.

Provide more seating for small groups and individuals. The park features two large pavilions and a few picnic tables, but only one bench. During weekdays, the pavilions are often used by groups from the neighboring offices. More seating should be provided to suit small groups, families and individuals. If trails are extended as recommended, more benches should be established along the trails. Movable seating, such as Adirondack chairs, or light weight outdoor furniture, could be provided to allow visitors the freedom to sit where they want.

Ensure the accessible parking spaces meet the standards set forth by the Americans with Additional landscaping, curb cuts and paths would make the parking areas more pedestrian friendly and aesthetically pleasing.
Disabilities Act of 2010, or more recent amendments or legislation. It is unclear whether the accessible parking spaces meet the most current standards. It appears that some signage may be missing. Additionally, visitors appear to park across the spaces provided behind the tenant house.

Improve the parking areas to be safer, more comfortable and more pedestrian friendly. The park contains between 110 to 115 spaces, which appears to be adequate. However, the parking areas could be improved as follows:

- Remove the shrubs and tall grasses from the islands at the ends of the parking rows, as they block drivers’ sight.
- Install a curb cut where the trail meets the parking lot. A cut here would make it easier for people with mobility issues, pushing a stroller or using a cart to bring food or equipment down the trail to the pavilions.
- Install walkways around the edge of the parking area, so people can safely enter or exit the parking lot nearest their parking space, rather than walking across the parking lot.

The pavilion at Valley Creek Park is well used during weekdays by employees at the surrounding office complexes, who sometimes meet there informally over lunch.
Battle of the Clouds Park

**Snapshot**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type:</th>
<th>Township Park</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Location:</td>
<td>133 Phoenixville Pike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Size:</td>
<td>11.7 Acres</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses:</td>
<td>Active and Passive Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilities:</td>
<td>Parking – 105 spaces including 6 HC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bathrooms</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Connection to the</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Chester Valley Trail</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Playground</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Bleachers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pavilion with seating and picnic tables</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>One soccer field (300’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two volleyball courts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Two baseball fields (60’ bases, 200’ outfield)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Natural Resources:</td>
<td>Buffer plantings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hedgerows</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Overview**

Battle of the Clouds Park was originally designed and built to focus on team sports such as baseball and soccer. However, over time, other amenities such as pavilions and playgrounds have been added to the park, making it more inviting to others, not interested in sports. The opening of the Chester Valley Trail also makes the park more accessible. The bathrooms, pavilion and benches also provide a nice resting point for trail users.

**Strategies for Improvement**

Prepare a landscape plan to guide further beautification, land and water stewardship and tree replacement. All of the Township’s parks should have a landscape plan to guide planting projects and to act as an inventory to guide replacement as trees in the parks die and are removed. Landscape plans should be prepared by a registered landscape architect and should provide a cohesive plant palette, employing native species consistent with those growing naturally in surrounding areas. At Valley Creek Park, the following areas should be specifically addressed:
• Buffering from Phoenixville Pike - The area between the main parking area and Phoenixville Pike should be planted with more trees and shrubs to visually separate the park from the busy road. Plantings here would help to beautify the park and the parking area.

• Shade Trees and Gardens for Playgrounds – The playgrounds can be beautified with shade trees and gardens which would provide shade, color, texture, fragrance and movement. Shade trees would provide shade for kids playing, as well as for caregivers, and could also shade some equipment, keeping it from getting too hot to use in the summer and potentially extending its lifespan. Gardens could focus on educational topics, such as habitat, stormwater management, pollination, insect lifecycles or the food chain. They could also be themed for edible or medicinal plants, or to attract birds, butterflies, or other wildlife. Gardens could also be designed to provide some boundaries and a sense of enclosure to the play areas.

• Flowering Trees along the trail connector – Flowering trees can be planted along the trail which connects the parking area to the Chester Valley Trail. Species such as birch, chokecherry, serviceberry or hawthorns could provide some shade and beauty to the trail, without extensive root systems which can damage trails. Flowering trees would also better define the trail and could draw attention to it, highlighting the importance of the connection to the Chester Valley Trail.

• Landscaping for sports fields – Landscaping could be provided to improve conditions for game play and practice. Dark colored plants including evergreen trees and shrubs could be planted beyond the centerfield fences to provide a batter’s eye. Other plantings around the fields could provide better visibility for game play, making it easier for players to see a thrown or batted ball. Landscaping could also help to block glare off cars parked nearby. More shade trees could also provide shade for spectators at both the baseball and soccer fields. All these plantings would also beautify the park.

• Shade Trees for Parking Areas – The main parking area features trees along much of the eastern edge. More trees could be planted at the southern end of the parking area, where there are none. If any parking spaces can be spared, a few parking spaces could be removed and replaced with
planting islands, which would allow trees to be planted within the parking area. This would beautify the parking area and provide more shade.

- **Shrubs for Parking Areas** – The main parking area is the least attractive part of the park (as are most parking areas), but also one of the most visibly prominent. Shrubs should be planted around the parking area to provide both physical and visual separation from the rest of the park. Shrubs could be planted as a hedge, hedgerow or naturalized groupings. Shrubs would visually screen cars, beautify the parking area and help to block headlights during evening events.

- **Best Management Practices** – A landscape plan could also propose plantings which could act as BMP’s, which could help East Whiteland Township meet federal MS4 requirements. These could include vegetated buffers, vegetated swales and basins, establishment of meadows and other types of plantings. These BMP’s could also reduce mowing and beautify the park through additional plantings.

**Improve the bathroom area.** The permanent and fully functional bathroom is an important amenity at Battle of the Clouds Park, as bathrooms are necessary in parks which feature multiple team sports facilities. Most visitors to Battle of the Clouds Park cannot walk to their homes, so the permanent bathroom is necessary. The building appears to be in good condition, but it doesn’t feel well connected to the rest of the park. There is a trail to the bathroom, but it connects only to the parking area and appears to have been established only to meet the need for an accessible route to the handicapped accessible parking spaces. The bathroom should be connected with trails to the sports fields and other amenities. Landscaping should also be provided around the bathroom, which should include shade trees to shade the building and easily maintained foundation plantings. A bathroom shouldn’t be a dominant feature, but its setting should still feel park-like. Plantings and connections would improve its setting.

**Enhance the circulation system in the park to improve recreation and access.** The path from the parking area to the bathroom, and the path from the parking area to the Chester Valley Trail are the only trails in the park. There is no trail to permit recreational walking within the site. The Chester Valley Trail can provide this opportunity for most visitors, but not for caregivers who need to stay on site while children are participating in baseball or soccer practice. A perimeter trail should be established around the park. Further study is necessary to determine exactly how and where a trail could be established. However, it appears that additional trails could be installed between the parking lot and Phoenixville Pike, from the bathroom area behind the baseball fields and connecting back to the CVT. An additional trail may also be feasible between the parking area and the rest of the park. Including the CVT connector path and the stretch of the CVT

Minor upgrades like extending existing paths can greatly improve access to many features found within the park.
adjacent to the park, these new trails would create a loop around the park. Visitors could use this loop without getting too far from the park.

Remove barriers and provide upgrades which permit people of differing abilities to use the playgrounds and other amenities. It may not be possible to make the entirety of the park universally accessible. However, it is possible to remove some barriers and provide some accessible routes and other amenities to make it more accessible. While improving our parks, it is important to remember that people are not simply able or disabled - physical abilities span a continuum. Therefore, some improvements, while not up to ADA standards, could still allow more people to access the amenities within the park. We recommend the following:

- **Connect the pavilion, playgrounds and handicapped parking spaces with an accessible route.** These three amenities are all very close to each other, making it relatively easy to provide additional paths to connect them. While the playgrounds may not offer universally accessible features, we should still make them as accessible as possible. Some visitors may need a wheelchair or walker to get to the playgrounds but may be able to use the existing equipment. Providing accessible routes would make these features more accessible.

- **Make the playground more accessible and appealing to children of all abilities.** After the playgrounds are connected with accessible routes, the equipment could be modified to include attachments or additional elements which would cater to children with differing abilities. The ground surface could be replaced with an accessible surface such as poured rubber or engineered wood fiber.

- **Improve the bleacher area to accommodate people of differing abilities.** An accessible route and an accessible pad or seating should be provided to allow more visitors to use the bleachers and surrounding area to watch baseball.

- **Provide more benches and shade at the playgrounds.** The playgrounds and pavilion are well sited to allow caregivers with multiple children to multi-task. They move around this space and keep an eye on children who may be at different playground equipment, or even playing soccer or baseball. However, more benches and shade would make this area even better, as they would give caregivers more options to allow them to view different parts of the park at once.

- **Provide more seating or small pavilions to support team sports.** The small pavilion is well sited to serve the playgrounds and small groups. But there may be a need for similar structures or gathering areas to serve the sports facilities as well. Teams could gather before or after games, volunteers could use them as meeting places and families watching the games could use them as well. They could be
sited between the baseball fields and the bathrooms and near the volleyball courts.

**Delineate areas adjacent to the baseball fields for bullpens, on-deck circles and warm up areas.** It is unclear where players currently warm up, await their turn at bat or prepare to pitch during the game. It may improve safety if these areas are clearly delineated and potentially fenced in to contain errant pitches and to separate others from a player swinging a bat.

**Improve the playing surface of the volleyball courts.** The courts are currently surfaced with a fine stone and cinders surface contained with a raised metal edging. The edging creates a tripping hazard and has an edge which could potentially injure a player. The stone surface could also scrape and cut a player who falls or dives on the surface. Grass and weeds are also beginning to grow through the stones. The volleyball courts should be rebuilt to provide either a sand or sport court surface. For a sand surface, the court should be excavated to a depth of 1 ½ to 3’ and constructed with proper subsurface drainage. A sport court surface would be more expensive, but could be built to accommodate multiple sports, potentially including basketball, hockey and soccer.
Township Building Site

**Snapshot**

Type: Township Park  
Location: 209 Conestoga Road  
Size: 13.1 Acres +/- (Twp Building)  
Uses: None  
Facilities: Parking, Stormwater Basins, CVT Trailhead  
Natural Resources: Tributary to Valley Creek, Mature trees

**Overview**

The Township building site primarily functions as the township administration and public works facility. However, the open lands surrounding the buildings, as well as the connection to the Chester Valley Trail, and proximity to Ecology Park, offer opportunities for further development of the site to better serve the residents as a park and recreation facility. Chester Valley Trail users can currently use the bathroom inside the building, but this situation is less than ideal and could be improved.

**Strategies for Improvement**

Prepare a campus plan to better connect the Township Building, the Fire House, the Chester Valley Trail and Ecology Park with pedestrian and bicycle facilities, while integrating a new Police Station and an improved trailhead and developing the site into a park. A campus plan would offer opportunities to coordinate many improvements into a single process, thereby streamlining and ensuring that the improvements work well together and meet the needs of the Township and residents. A campus plan should include:

- A plan for the township owned residence on Mill Lane, south of the fire house. As the Township campus is further developed, this 2-acre property could be integrated and used to house the police station, a trailhead a park, parking area or other related use. This should be included in the campus plan.
- A landscape plan to make the Township building site more park like, beautiful and welcoming to the public. Areas of the site which have recently been developed, including the new parking areas associated with the township building and the fire house, have been planted with trees and shrubs. However, the remainder of the site could benefit from a landscape plan. More trees could be planted along the entry drive and other plantings could further beautify the site.

- Improved pedestrian amenities to better connect the Chester Valley Trail, township building and Ecology Park. The township building site could be improved with a walking path through the site and crosswalks at the intersection with Conestoga Road. Paths would connect the parks and trails and would also improve the connections between the township building and the fire hall.

- An improved or new Chester Valley Trail trailhead including a bathroom and other bicycle and pedestrian amenities. Trail users currently use the Township building bathrooms during regular business hours. However, there are times, such as weekends, when the trail is in heavy use, but the Township building is closed. New bathrooms could be integrated into the planned police building, with inside and outside access. A trailhead should also feature more bicycle related amenities such as a pump and fixit station. Vending machines could provide typical snacks and drinks and could cater specifically to cyclists and runners by offering basic necessities, equipment and parts such as bicycle tubes and patch kits, sunblock, reflector bands, and shoelaces. By placing a trailhead close to the police station, officers can keep an eye on it and have easy access to the trail in case of an emergency. Additionally, a trailhead here could encourage the police and trail users to interact with each other positively.

Establish a meadow on the steep hillside above the fire hall parking area. The hillside is covered in turfgrass and mowed on a regular basis. Establishing a meadow here would decrease time, money and fuel spent on mowing this area. Meadow plants would also better manage stormwater, provide habitat and food sources and beautify the site.

Buffer the tributary to Valley Creek. The tributary to Valley Creek flows through the northern section of the site, between the buildings and Conestoga Road, before crossing under the road and into Ecology Park. Some trees exist along the tributary, but most of the area adjacent to the creek is covered in turfgrass. This is, in part, due to the existing sewer easement. The areas adjacent to the creek, within 100 feet of the bank, should be planted with trees or meadow grasses to better protect water quality and keep the tributary cool.
Prepare a stewardship and restoration plan to complement a landscape plan and identify ways to better steward the resources on site. A stewardship plan would assess the condition of natural features on site, including the tributary to Valley Creek, the existing trees and the existing stormwater management areas.
Ecology Park

Snapshot
Type: Township Park
Location: 210 Conestoga Road
Size: 11.2 Acres
Uses: Passive Recreation
Facilities: Benches and picnic tables
Natural Resources: Valley Creek
Mature trees

Overview
Ecology Park is the perfect place for a quick nature walk or a picnic lunch in the shade. The half mile trail takes visitors through woodlands, an open field and back and forth over Valley Creek. The woodlands feature a mix of native tree species but are also overrun with invasive understory species. Many of the mature trees are tagged with identification placards. The newly added picnic tables will better serve the many visitors who currently come to the park to eat lunch in their cars. Despite being nestled in between Routes 202 and 401 and Mill Lane, the park feels secluded and peaceful. A sewer line and easement run through the park, which dictate how some areas may be managed.

Strategies for Improvement
Prepare a stewardship and restoration plan. The nature trail is the park’s greatest asset. However, the nature surrounding the trail is degrading, as invasive species such as shrub honeysuckle are taking over the forest. Invasive species can outcompete our native species and come to dominate a natural area. Without native species, our native animals will have no pollen or food sources, host plants or suitable habitat. The Township should hire a qualified professional to prepare a stewardship plan for the park, which would identify issues such as the spread of invasive species and provide recommendations for improving the natural areas.

Improve visibility into the parking area to make visitors feel safer. The thick vegetation which grows between Conestoga Road and the parking lot blocks visibility into the site from the road and surroundings. This vegetation should be cleared, or at least thinned, and replaced with plantings which permit views into and out of the parking area.

Enhance and increase the educational efforts such as tree labeling. Ecology Park is well suited to environmental education, as it features a parking area, a picnic area, a forest, Valley Creek and a trail which provides access to the natural areas. Some of the trees have been labeled with small signs stating the common and scientific names. Bluebird boxes have also
been placed in the park. The park could be used for more environmental education and could be enhanced to further the bluebird box and tree labeling initiatives. More labels could be used to identify trees and more bird habitat could be established through native meadow plantings. Interpretive signage could be established to explain topics such as, invasive pests like the Emerald Ash Borer and Spotted Lanternfly, water quality and Valley Creek, and habitat and food sources for native plants.

**Prepare a landscape plan to guide future plantings at the park.** All of the parks should be planted only with native plant species. However, this is especially important at Ecology Park, as the name suggests that the park be ecologically driven. A landscape plan would help to guide plantings of street trees, meadows, reforestation projects or enhancement of the existing forests, all while improving the visitor experience.

**Address the abundance of geese at the park and surrounding sites.** Geese have negatively impacted the visitor experience at Ecology Park, as they cover the grass and trail with their droppings. While many municipalities use dogs, predator shaped silhouettes or more time intensive strategies such as addling eggs, we have found the elimination of turf grass to be more effective. Geese appear to dislike tall grasses, shrubs and other vegetation which can limit their sightlines. If they can’t see their surroundings, they are more susceptible to attack from predators such as foxes. We recommend that the turf grass areas be eliminated or greatly reduced, by planting trees and shrubs or establishing a meadow. Reducing the amount of turf grass should reduce the amount of geese.

**Improve the parking area and existing trail, or portions thereof, to meet the standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act.** The existing nature path, constructed of a combination of loose gravel, stone fines and pavers, is the main attraction at Ecology Park. Most, if not all of this trail could be reconstructed with other materials which would meet the standards of the ADA. Many modern materials, such as stabilized decomposed granite and engineered, compressed stones and fines, have a natural look, but still meet ADA standards. The Township should provide handicapped parking spaces and an accessible trail to the picnic area and consider converting the entire trail to accessible materials.

**Provide crosswalks across Conestoga Road and create a pedestrian entrance.** The park can currently only be accessed by car. The Township building and Chester Valley Trail are directly across Conestoga Road. If crosswalks and a pedestrian entrance were provided, people could safely enter the park on foot or by bicycle. This may allow Township employees to safely visit the park on their lunch breaks, or for residents to use the Chester Valley Trail to
travel to the Township building, then safely walk or bike to Ecology Park from there.

**Assess stormwater management throughout the park, as flow appears to be eroding the open grass area and the areas surrounding the Township utility yard and washing sediment into Valley Creek.** Stormwater management is necessary to eliminate the flow of sediment into Valley Creek, as sediment can damage the creek’s Exceptional Value water quality and damage fish habitat. In the open grass area, it is possible that meadow or tree plantings could solve the problem. In the area behind the Township utility yard, there isn’t much room for planting. An engineered solution such as an infiltration pit, or underground storage facility may be necessary. Any project which reduces the amount of sediment washing into Valley Creek could help the Township meet MS4 requirements.

**Provide plantings which buffer the Township utility yard from view.** This area is not attractive and detracts from the natural features of Ecology Park. Buffer plantings should be provided around the area, or strategically placed within the park to block views of the buildings. Additionally, more plantings along Conestoga Road could better hide the area from the surrounding streets.

**Plant the sewer easement with meadow grasses or allow the existing grass to grow taller.** Sewer easements typically don’t permit trees and shrubs to be planted within their boundaries. However, the existing turf grass areas are contributing to issues including erosion, geese and an environmental dead zone. Turf grass does a poor job of holding soil together as it has shallow roots. Geese prefer the short grass for visibility and safety from predators. Turf grass typically does not include native species and therefore does not support native birds, mammals or insects. The areas within the sewer easement can likely be converted to native grasses, which would help solve these issues, while still allowing easy access to the below ground pipe in case of emergency.
Spring Mill Farm Park

Snapshot

Type: Neighborhood Park
Location: 40 Atterbury Drive
Size: 4.4 Acres
Uses: Passive Recreation
Facilities: One Bench
Volleyball Court Posts (Remnants)
Flexible space
Natural Resources: Mature trees at edges
Scattered trees

Overview

Spring Mill Farm Park is a 4-acre open field which primarily serves the Spring Mill neighborhood. The park features only one bench and the remnants of a volleyball court. The space is used infrequently for neighborhood events. The park is surrounded by single family residences, Great Valley High School and corporate offices. Opportunities exist to better connect the park to its surroundings and to improve it to better serve the other potential users.

Strategies for Improvement

Prepare a master plan and landscape plan to guide further improvements at Spring Mill Farm Park. The park currently consists only of four acres of mowed turf with some scattered trees. The park serves the surrounding neighborhood, as they use it for informal game play and neighborhood events. However, the cost and time spent on mowing this amount of turf grass to accommodate such little use does not appear to be cost effective. The park could be improved to better accommodate events, reduce mowing, and provide more access and consistent use while still meeting the needs of the neighborhood. A large, open space could be retained as a flexible space for events and the park could remain passive in nature. Much of the open turf could be converted to a meadow, which would require far less mowing and maintenance once it is established. A master plan should be developed in accordance with further study and a robust public planning process.

Provide a walking loop path around the park. A paved trail or natural surface path of a material such as stabilized crushed stone could be
established around the perimeter of the park. The path could be as long as one quarter mile. This simple walking path would provide a reason for people to use the park more often, especially if the park were to be improved and beautified with more trees, shrubs, meadows or other plantings.

Provide a connecting trail to nearby trail projects, open spaces and other residents. The park is currently isolated within the neighborhood. However, it could serve as a neighborhood trailhead if some other recommendations are implemented. This plan recommends working with the owners of the St. Gobain property nearby to acquire or lease a portion of the property. Should an agreement be reached, a trail could be established from Spring Mill Farm park, through other adjacent private properties, to access the St. Gobain site. Additionally, the Township is currently working on a new trail project which would connect this neighborhood to the Chester Valley Trail by way of Sidley Road. The park could potentially be connected to that trail project as well. A few residential properties also exist on Moores Road. These residents are within easy walking distance of the park but lack a safe route. An additional trail could also provide them with better access to the park.

Enhance and beautify the park entrance. The park currently has no formal entrance as the property simply opens onto Atterbury Road. A more formal entrance would make the park more beautiful and welcoming. By guiding visitors through a designed and planned entrance, they can be made to pass signage or notices that share information or rules. A better designed road frontage could also play a role in keeping children more safely contained within the park. A designed entrance would also help establish a sense of place, letting visitors know that they’ve arrived at a park, not just a leftover field.

Provide accessible parking and an entrance which meet the standards set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 2010, or more recent amendments or legislation. The park currently lacks any amenities which meet these standards. Currently, visitors with disabilities may have difficulty even entering the park. Any future grant funding to improve this park would require parking to accommodate visitors with special needs. The park could be improved to be more accessible through the creation of accessible parking spaces, routes, trails and amenities, in accordance with a master plan.

Create a curb cut where the path to the school meets the road. It is unclear whether the path meets the requirements of the ADA but providing a curb cut will make it more
accessible than it is now. A curb cut would also better accommodate caregivers pushing a stroller and student athletes pulling rolling equipment bags.

Install a small pavilion or gathering area to accommodate small to mid-sized groups. The park could better serve the neighborhood by providing a space for groups to gather. Residents could use a pavilion for neighborhood gatherings like barbecues, or scout, club or other social meetings. People associated with the surrounding non-residential properties, including the office building, may also use the space for lunch, or outdoor meetings. In lieu of

a pavilion, a series of shade sails, or a planted grove may also be appropriate.

Provide a more welcoming rear entrance to the park, to accommodate nearby office workers and residents on Moores Road. CLF Westbrook Malvern Business Trust owns the office building and two vacant parcels south of the park. The park is currently isolated from these properties by landscaped buffering and a large gate and fence structure. The Township should work with this neighbor to cooperate in creating access to the park through these properties to serve the office workers and the residents nearby on Moores Road.

Remove or relocate the posts. Two posts stand near the eastern edge of the park, which appear to have supported a volleyball or badminton net. However, there is no net and only the posts remain. Additionally, a tree has grown into and above the playing area. The posts should either be removed entirely or relocated to a more suitable location.
Whiteland Farm Park

Snapshot

Type: Neighborhood Park
Location: 25 Birch Road
Size: 1.36 Acres
Uses: Passive and Active
Facilities: Picnic Tables, Playground Equipment, Basketball Court, Flexible space
Natural Resources: Little Valley Creek, Mature trees

Overview

Whiteland Farm Park is a small, neighborhood park which serves the Whiteland Farm community. The park has an open feel to it, with little landscaping or sense of enclosure. The park features a basketball court, a picnic table and playground equipment. It is adjacent to PECO right-of-way, which may provide opportunities for expanding the park and connecting it to nearby neighborhoods, commercial areas and trails.

Strategies for Improvement

Prepare a master plan to guide further improvements at Whiteland Farm Park. The park lacks any setting or a sense of place. It feels like a loose collection of park amenities scattered across a grass lot. A master plan would organize the existing features and provide improvements to make the park a true neighborhood destination.

Provide a walking loop path around the park and connect to amenities. A paved trail around the perimeter of the park would provide for multiple improvements. It would help to connect all of the park elements, making the park feel more cohesive and organized. It would be an amenity, as it would provide people with a place to walk within the park. While the loop would be relatively short at only approximately .10 miles, it could still serve park visitors. It would allow caregivers to get up and move while keeping children in sight, as they may be playing on the playground or basketball court.

Provide a connecting trail to the neighboring shopping center. The park property is directly adjacent to the shopping center property. A trail through the park into the shopping center would provide direct access without requiring neighbors to walk along busy roads. An informal path currently exists, potentially created by one of the neighbors. The Township, PECO and the shopping center owners may wish to formalize an agreement to perpetuate the trail and possibly enhance it to create a paved, accessible trail.
Prepare a landscape plan to guide further beautification and organization of the park. Whiteland Farm Park suffers from a severe lack of landscaping, most notably shade trees. Most of the township’s parks use landscaping to beautify the parks, provide shade and delineate spaces and uses. At Whiteland Farm Park, landscaping could help to contain the play areas, provide shade over the picnic tables and playground equipment, add a sense of enclosure to the entire space and make it feel more park-like. Whiteland Farm park needs a landscape plan to accompany any master planning or other initiatives to improve the park.

Enhance and beautify the park entrance. The park currently has no formal entrance as the property simply opens onto Birch Road. A more formal entrance would make the park more beautiful and welcoming. By guiding visitors through a designed and planned entrance, they can be made to pass signage or notices that share information or rules. A better designed road frontage could also play a role in keeping children more safely contained within the park.

Provide an accessible parking space, entrance, circulation system and amenities which meet the standards set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 2010, or more recent amendments or legislation. The park currently lacks any amenities which meet these standards. The Township should install improvements to make the park more accessible to visitors of all abilities by working from the outside in. Currently, visitors with disabilities may have difficulty even entering the park. Any future grant funding to improve this park would require parking to accommodate visitors with special needs. The Township could make the following improvements:

- There is no parking at the park, which limits use to those who can walk or cycle there. This is appropriate for the size and location of Whiteland Farm Park. However, a near neighbor with a disability may be excluded from using the park. The Township should consider striping one or two accessible parking spaces on Birch Road and providing the necessary signage, curb cuts and associated improvements.

- The park currently lacks paths or connections between the recreational elements. Visitors walk through the grass to get where they wish. The park could be improved to be more accessible with the addition of an accessible trail connecting to the elements throughout the park.

- The park currently lacks features or supporting amenities which meet the standards set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Once the major elements of the park are connected by an accessible route, each element should be upgraded to provide accessible amenities. Examples may include accessible ground surfaces, picnic tables, benches, and play equipment.
Improve the basketball court’s immediate surroundings. Benches or other seating should be installed nearby, allowing players to rest, and spectators to sit and watch. Trees could be planted on the south side of the court to provide some shade.

Install a small pavilion or similar gathering area to accommodate small to mid-sized groups. The park could better serve the neighborhood by providing a space for groups to gather. Residents could use a pavilion for neighborhood gatherings like barbecues, or scout, club or other social meetings. People associated with the surrounding non-residential properties, including the church, may also use the space for lunch, or outdoor meetings.

Organize the playground area by adding equipment, play features and elements of whimsy while creating a sense of place. The playground features at the park are spread across the parcel, with little connectivity or sense of a defined play space. The playground could be enhanced relocating the features in a more cohesive layout, and by adding more play features, such as a playhouse, artistic features or elements which could address accessibility issues. The playground area could be more playful, childlike and whimsical, with the addition of bird houses, a story path, fairy houses, a playhouse, flowering shrubs and other elements, designed or chosen to fit a consistent theme. Components could be added to the existing equipment that would establish the area as ADA compliant.
Down East Park

**Snapshot**

Type: Neighborhood Park  
Location: 36 Winding Way  
Size: 2.5 Acres  
Uses: Active and Passive Recreation  
Facilities: Playground – Slide, swings, tube/tunnel, & climbing equipment  
Benches and picnic tables  
Backstop  
Basketball (full court)  
Natural Resources: Little Valley Creek  
Mature trees

**Overview**

Down East Park is a hidden gem, tucked away behind a quiet neighborhood. Most residents probably don’t know that it exists. The park is sized and designed to serve visitors who can arrive on foot. There is no parking, and at only 2.5 acres, the park is not large enough to host organized sports or very large events. An existing sewer easement crosses the site and limits some uses and maintenance strategies. The park is well suited to serving the surrounding neighborhood, as it does now, with its playground and basketball court. But it also has the potential to become so much more, connecting the neighborhood to surrounding businesses, protecting the important Little Valley Creek and offering further opportunities to play, socialize, engage in activities that promote health and wellness, and connect with nature.

**Strategies for Improvement**

Prepare a master plan to guide future development of the park. The Township is continually faced with decisions regarding park improvements, upgrades and funding opportunities. When opportunities arise, the Township should be well positioned to easily determine which opportunities to pursue. A master plan will guide future development of the park, whether that development is a major overhaul, or gradual improvements. A master plan will ensure that the park is developed and improved in a way that results in an attractive, cohesive design which meets current standards for safety and accessibility and builds upon the park’s wonderful atmosphere which needs to be retained through effective landscaping.
Prepare a landscape plan to guide further beautification and tree replacement. The mature trees are one of the defining features of the park. They provide shade and help to define the spaces. They add beauty and contribute to the local ecology. They also capture rainwater and absorb runoff, helping to manage stormwater in the park. By absorbing and filtering runoff, they also help to protect the Little Valley Creek, an important tributary to the Valley Creek, which is designated as a High Quality Waters stream. However, many of the mature Ash trees are nearing the end of their lifespan, as they’ve been attacked by the Emerald Ash Borer. Additionally, the mature trees are grouped around the playground, but much of the rest of the park is free of trees. The Township should prepare a landscape plan, featuring native species, to beautify the park, provide more shade, buffer the stream, contribute further to the local ecology and succeed the Ash which will soon die off.

Conduct a hazard tree assessment. The township should conduct hazard tree assessments in all the parks on a yearly basis, and as needed after major weather events. The assessment should be conducted by an arborist, forester or similarly qualified professional. The assessments would identify and examine trees which could pose a hazard to park visitors or property, such as neighboring buildings. Trees deemed to be hazardous should then be removed.

Many of the mature trees within Down East Park are Ash. Ash are an important native tree species which has historically been a major component of Pennsylvania’s forests. However, over the course of the past decade, an invasive beetle from Asia, the emerald ash borer, has decimated the Ash population, killing mature trees where they stand. The ash in Down East Park appear to be infested with emerald ash borers, as the branches in the uppermost reaches of the crowns have died. Soon, all the ash trees in the park will die, leaving hazardous, standing dead trees.

Provide signs throughout the park in accordance with a Township wide signage system. Signs should be placed at the entrance and at the playground, displaying rules and regulations, interpretative information, hours and other pertinent information. Distance markers and wayfinding signs could also be posted on future pathways.

All the Township parks, trails and open spaces should feature consistent, professionally designed and fabricated signs. In many communities, signage is addressed on an as-needed basis, leading to an uncoordinated, mismatched display of signs of different colors, fonts, shapes and sizes. While the signs typically do the job of displaying information, the mismatched display is not very pleasing to the entrance to Down East Park is non-descript and hidden from view. The entrance could be improved with signage and plantings to create a more welcoming atmosphere.
eye. It also demonstrates a lack of planning. A unified signage system should convey the necessary information but do so in an aesthetically pleasing manner. Signage should be consistent in colors, fonts, size and messaging. The signage should use the Township’s logo and colors and clearly identify Township owned lands. Signage should display important information such as the name of the park or facility, rules and regulations, directions, interpretative and educational information. Signs should also help visitors identify their location in case of emergency.

A well designed and constructed signage system helps to brand the Township identity, gives a presence to the parks, and commands respect. It also demonstrates the size and extent of the Township parks and recreation system. Once a signage system is created, it can be phased in over time, such as when improvements are made in each park.

**Enhance and beautify the park entrance.** The park entrance provides a nice sequence spatially, as visitors transition from the street, through a narrow driveway, over the Little Valley Creek and then enter the wide-open space of the park. This transition from narrow entrance into the open park provides a smooth transition and a sense of arrival at the end of a nice entry sequence. However, the path and its surroundings could be beautified through additional plantings and an improved path surface.

**Buffer the Little Valley Creek to help protect its High Quality Waters designation.** Planted buffers help to keep nutrients, pollutants and sediment out of waterways. Buffers, made up of trees, shrubs and tall grasses, are typically recommended to be a minimum of 100’ wide along streambanks. Little Valley Creek flows through the neighboring properties, meandering between 35 to 70 feet from the park boundary. The Township could work with the neighbors to plant trees within this area to provide a buffer for the creek. Trees may not be permitted to be planted within the sewer easement which crosses the park, parallel to the creek, but the grass within the easement could be allowed to grow into a meadow, which would also help to buffer the creek.

**Assess the current mowing schedule and areas.** Most municipalities spend more time mowing grass than is necessary. At Down East Park, it appears that the Township may be unnecessarily mowing the area south of the basketball courts, and possibly into the PECO easement. It does not appear that this area is used by the public much, if ever. The Township could reduce mowing here in order to save time, money and fuel, while expanding the

*Stormwater runs off the playground surface, eroding the area around the benches.*
existing meadow, providing improved habitat and stormwater management.

Assess the existing playground layout for conformity with current safety requirements. The existing playground is well situated within a grove of mature trees which provide shade and a sense of enclosure, making the playground and picnic area a very comfortable space for visitors. It’s an important space where park visitors spend extended time. It’s very calming and comfortable. The playground contains new equipment in addition to an older set of swings. The equipment appears to be in good shape. However, to ensure visitors’ safety, the Township should contract with a Certified Playground Safety Inspector (CPSI) to assess all the playgrounds for conformity with current Consumer Product Safety Commission guidelines. These guidelines relate to fall zones, equipment safety, separation distances and acceptable materials. The Township should keep records of these inspections on file for at least 20 years.

Provide an accessible parking space, entrance, circulation system and amenities which meet the standards set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 2010, or more recent amendments or legislation. The park currently lacks any amenities which meet these standards. The Township should install improvements to make the park more accessible to visitors of all abilities by working from the outside in. Currently, visitors with disabilities may have difficulty even entering the park. Any future grant funding to improve this park would require parking to accommodate visitors with special needs. The Township could make the following improvements:

- There is no parking at the park, which limits use to those who can walk or cycle there.

  This is appropriate for the size and location of Down East Park. However, a near neighbor with a disability may be excluded from using the park. The Township should consider striping one or two accessible parking spaces on the cul-de-sac of Winding Way, or at the entrance to the driveway.

- Visitors currently enter the park through a dirt and gravel driveway from the street. Visitors with limited mobility may have difficulty traversing this driveway. The Township may consider resurfacing the driveway with paving or a compressed and stabilized stone or aggregate surface to provide an accessible route into the park. An accessible route should also connect to any accessible parking spaces, as recommended above in 7a.

- The park currently lacks paths or connections between the recreational elements. Visitors walk through the grass to get where they wish. The park could be improved to be more accessible with the addition of accessible trails from the driveway, connecting to the elements throughout the park.
• The park currently lacks features or supporting amenities which meet the standards set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act. Once the major elements of the park are connected by an accessible route, each element should be upgraded to provide accessible amenities. Examples may include accessible ground surfaces, picnic tables, benches, and play equipment.

Formalize, coordinate and connect the trail to the CVT with Down East Park. Liberty Property Limited Partnership, the park’s neighbor to the north and east, has permitted the neighborhood to use a trail from the end of Winding Way to the Chester Valley Trail. This is a wonderful example of public/private cooperation to improve the neighborhood. However, as the sign states, Liberty Property LP can close the trail at any time, at their discretion. The Township and Chester County should negotiate with Liberty Property LP to obtain a trail easement, to formalize and perpetuate the agreement to permit residents to use the trail.

Additionally, the trailhead should be moved from the road to the park. This would give the Township the ability to create a more beautiful and formal trailhead than what exists now. It would also allow for better connection between Down East Park and the Chester Valley Trail. It could also give the Township and County the ability to create an accessible trail from the neighborhood to the Chester Valley Trail, building off the recommended improvements described above.

Provide a walking loop path around the park and connect to amenities. A paved trail around the perimeter of the park would provide for multiple improvements. It would help to connect all of the park elements, making the park feel more cohesive and organized. It would be an amenity, as it would provide people with a place to walk within the park. While the loop would be relatively short at only approximately .15 miles, it could still serve park visitors and workers from the office building. It would allow caregivers to get up and move while keeping children in sight, as they may be playing on the playground or basketball court. The employees from the office building may also be inclined to use this loop, as they could walk without getting too far away from the office.

Partner with neighboring properties such as PECO, People’s Light and neighboring offices and businesses. The park is surrounded by underutilized properties and opportunities to make local connections. The Township should contact the surrounding landowners to discuss these opportunities.

• 50 GVP Property Co. LLC – As discussed above, the Township and office property could work together to formalize the connection to the Chester Valley Trail. Additionally, the Township and 50 GVP could reach an agreement to permit park users to park in the office lot and establish an entrance trail with signage. A strong relationship between the Township and 50
GVP could lead to additional opportunities for further improvements, volunteer workdays and partnerships.

- **PECO** – The property directly south of the park is owned by PECO and accommodates two high tension power lines. The property appears to be under multiple leases, to People’s Light, 50 GVP and at least one other local property owner. East Whiteland could pursue a lease of the remaining land to expand Down East Park and create connections to surrounding businesses and offices, such as People’s Light, the Great Valley Center Stores and Offices, and 50 GVP.

- **People’s Light** – The theater is a locally important community space. However, the residents who live closest cannot safely walk there. The Township should consider partnering with the theater to establish a path from Down East Park to the theater. In conjunction with the recommended establishment of a trail easement, this path could ultimately connect the theater to the Chester Valley Trail, allowing even more residents to access the theater and surrounding businesses on foot or by bike.

- **The Great Valley Center Stores and Offices** – The shopping center is currently home to a great variety of businesses, including restaurants, markets, a gym, a yoga studio, a dry cleaner, electrical supply store and many others. But like People’s Light, the closest residents in the Down East neighborhood, cannot walk there safely. A path from Down East Park through the PECO property could provide a pleasant walk from the neighborhood into the shopping center.

**Consider expanding holdings around the park.** The park could be expanded and diversified through land acquisition, lease, easement or other legal agreements. The Little Valley Creek flows through many of the neighboring properties. By acquiring control over these sites, the Township could protect the creek, provide new trails and opportunities for residents to connect with nature and potentially limit future development of these sites.

**Remove the baseball backstop and repurpose the baseball field area.** It does not appear that the baseball field area is used very often, as there are no established base paths. Additionally, the existing features don’t support baseball, as the home plate area is only approximately 135’ from an existing utility pole supporting power lines. For little league or tee ball, the outfield fence should be a minimum of 200’ from home plate. Additionally, the land slopes upward from home plate at an approximate grade of 6%. This is too steep and isn’t graded properly for play.

**Establish and mark the park boundaries.** Down East Park is surrounded by seven other properties, which include 50 GVP, PECO, an undeveloped woodland, and private, residential properties. Four of these properties contain
single family homes, whose back yards are clearly visible from the park. Little Valley Creek flows through the backyards. Park visitors may incorrectly assume that the creek is the boundary between the properties and inadvertently trespass into the yards. The park should be surveyed, and all boundaries should be marked to avoid trespassing and encroachments, and to ensure that the Township staff is not maintaining more property than the Township owns. Additional plantings along the boundaries would also beautify the park and provide more privacy for the surrounding residents.

**Improve the basketball court and its immediate surroundings.** The basketball court needs to be resurfaced, as plants are growing through the cracks. The Township may wish to consider installing pervious pavement with a stormwater management chamber below. Additionally, benches should be installed nearby, allowing players to rest, and spectators to sit and watch. Trees could be planted on the south side of the court to provide some shade.

**Install a pavilion or similar gathering area to accommodate small to mid-sized groups.** The park could better serve the neighborhood by providing a space for groups to gather. Residents could use a pavilion for neighborhood gatherings like barbecues, or scout, club or other social meetings. The surrounding offices may also use these spaces for lunch, or outdoor meetings. Liberty Property LP is the park’s neighbor to the north and east. Existing connections including mowed paths and stairs allow office workers to enter the park from the office building property. However, there are few amenities in the park to serve the workers. Corporate employees fill the pavilions at other township parks on their lunch breaks. The Township should consider providing more picnic tables in a grouping or within a pavilion or similar structure. Providing some amenities which could accommodate the office workers could also be factored into negotiating the trail easement described above.

**Provide more seating including movable chairs.** Park seating is limited and there are only two picnic tables, which are directly adjacent to the playground. Given the location and seclusion of this park, the Township has the opportunity to include features like movable Adirondack chairs that park visitors really like. Research in other communities has found little to no theft of movable seating in parks.

**Enhance the playground area by adding equipment, play features and elements of whimsy.** The playground structures at Down East Park are in relatively good shape. Except for the swing set, the play structures are fairly new. The playground setting is also very comfortable, as tall trees provide shade and canopy overhead, and provide perceived boundaries. The playground could be enhanced by adding more play features, such as a playhouse, artistic features or elements which could address accessibility issues. The playground area could be more playful, childlike and whimsical, with the addition of bird houses, a story path, fairy houses, a play house,
lowering shrubs and other elements, designed or chosen to fit a consistent theme. Components could be added to the existing equipment that would establish the area as ADA compliant. Landscape Structures, a manufacturer that has provided equipment at multiple Township parks, could provide recommendations for additions to the existing equipment which they supplied.

Assess stormwater management throughout the park, as flow appears to be eroding the edge of the playground surface. It appears that stormwater is flowing down the hill along the eastern edge of the playground surface, where grass transitions to mulch. This is creating a channel which could become a tripping hazard. Additionally, if this channel is allowed to persist, it could worsen and eventually form a swale which could funnel water, carrying mulch and other debris, into Little Valley Creek. Currently, the playground mulch may be acting as a basin, collecting and absorbing the stormwater.

The adjacent PECO right of way could act as an extension of the park through a lease or other agreement permitting trails and connections.
Markel Road Playlot at Bryn Erin

**Snapshot**

- Type: Neighborhood Tot Lot
- Location: Markel Road
- Size: 0.11 Acres +/-
- Uses: Tot Lot
- Facilities: Bench
- Natural Resources: Mature trees at edge

**Overview**

This neighborhood playlot serves the Bryn Erin community, which consists of dense development on small lots. The playlot contains approximately .11 acres of land but exists within a larger parcel containing approximately 2.7 acres. The rest of the parcel contains a stormwater basin and an open, mowed turf field. The playlot provides a play space and functional equipment for children, but could be landscaped, beautified, and improved to become more of a community gathering space.

**Strategies for Improvement**

**Prepare a master plan and landscape plan to redesign all the parks and open spaces within Bryn Erin.** The playlots at Bryn Erin are contained within larger parcels, which contain basins and open fields. All of the spaces should be master planned together, to ensure efficient and cohesive planning. A neighborhood wide master plan could improve the playlots, provide for uses of the open areas, connect the public spaces, improve the basins and beautify the community. These spaces should be designed to serve the needs of the residents and also to fit in with the aesthetic of the surrounding development, which may lead to a more urban feel. As these parks and open spaces are only used by the surrounding Bryn Erin residents, neighborhood participation and support would be vital to preparation of a master plan.

**Name and identify the park.** The park on Markel Road doesn’t feature any signage to identify the space as a park, state the name of the park or welcome visitors to the park. Simply naming the park can help to give it some identity, which may help to engage neighbors in its improvement and maintenance. The site does contain a sign which says, “No pets allowed, Township Property.” This sign is not very welcoming to visitors and should be replaced with signs which identify the space as a park and state the rules and hours.
Plant flowering trees and shrubs to provide shade and beautify the park. The park features a few mature evergreen trees on the eastern edge but would benefit from more plantings. Small, flowering street trees could help add more definition, color and beauty to the park, while also benefitting the surrounding streets. Flowering shrubs would add beauty, color and whimsy to the space. The planting strip along Markel Road could also be planted with low maintenance perennials such as coneflowers or black eyed susans to add more color and beauty.

Diversify, relocate and modernize the seating options. The park currently features a single fixed bench. Seating should be spread throughout the park, allowing caregivers to choose a location to best watch their children, or for visitors to choose a shady or sunny location. Additionally, seating and tables which meet the standards of the ADA should be provided. Game tables could be installed to encourage adults to use the park more as well.

Provide additional elements for play, whimsy and connection to nature. The park could be improved to be more kid friendly with the addition of brighter colors, bird houses, play houses and other items or amenities.
Kelmar Avenue Playlot at Bryn Erin

**Snapshot**
- **Type:** Neighborhood Tot Lot
- **Location:** Kelmar Avenue cul-de-sac
- **Size:** 0.22 Acres +/-
- **Uses:** Tot Lot
- **Facilities:** Picnic Tables, Playground, Concrete Pad
- **Natural Resources:** Mature trees at edge

**Overview**
This small play lot serves the residents of the Bryn Erin community, which features high density development on small lots. The play lot itself consists of only approximately 0.22 acres but exists on a 1.4 acre lot which also contains a stormwater basin. The playlot is connected to the Chester Valley Trail by a new path, which provides access to the trail for the whole community. The playlot currently features picnic tables and a mix of modern and traditional play equipment. Aside from an encroachment, the space appears to function as a playlot but could be improved with landscaping and made to serve other community members in addition to children.

**Strategies for Improvement**
- **Prepare a master plan and landscape plan to redesign all the parks and open spaces within Bryn Erin.** The playlots at Bryn Erin are contained within larger parcels, which contain basins and open fields. All of the spaces should be master planned together, to ensure efficient and cohesive planning. A neighborhood wide master plan could improve the playlots, provide for uses of the open areas, connect the public spaces, improve the basins and beautify the community. These spaces should be designed to serve the needs of the residents and also to fit in with the aesthetic of the surrounding development, which may lead to a more urban feel. As these parks and open spaces are only used by the surrounding Bryn Erin residents, neighborhood participation and support would be vital to preparation of a master plan.

- **Name and identify the park.** The park on Kelmar Avenue doesn’t feature any signage to identify the space as a township park, state the name of the park or welcome visitors to the park. Simply naming the park can help to give it some identity, which may help to engage neighbors in its improvement and maintenance.

- **Enhance and beautify the park entrance.** The park currently has no formal entrance as the property simply opens onto Kelmar Avenue. A more formal entrance would make the park more beautiful and welcoming. By guiding visitors through a designed and planned...
entrance, they can be made to pass signage or notices that share information or rules. A better designed road frontage could also play a role in keeping children more safely contained within the park. A designed entrance would also help establish a sense of place, letting visitors know that they’ve arrived at a park.

Extend the sidewalk to the park. The neighborhood streets feature sidewalks. However, the sidewalks end at the last residential lot and don’t extend to the playground. The sidewalk should be extended around the bulb of the cul-de-sac, providing access to the park, as well as the planned trail connecting the area to the CVT.

Delineate the park boundaries with a fence around the entire perimeter. The park functions primarily as a playground for young children. Therefore, fencing or plantings should be installed to keep young children safely within the park and to keep cars and other encroachments out.

Provide accessible parking and an entrance which meet the standards set forth by the Americans with Disabilities Act of 2010, or more recent amendments or legislation. The park currently lacks any amenities which meet these standards. Currently, visitors with disabilities may have difficulty even entering the park. Any future grant funding to improve this park would require parking to accommodate visitors with special needs. The park could be improved to be more accessible through the creation of accessible parking spaces, routes, trails and amenities, in accordance with a master plan.

Plant more trees to provide shade at the park and naturalize the stormwater basin. The property to the west, Haym Solomon Cemetery, is wooded along the property boundary, so the park does get shade in the late afternoon into the evening. More trees could be planted on the south side of the park and within the basin area to provide more shade during the morning and early afternoon. The basin could also be naturalized to better filter stormwater, beautify the basin and provide habitat.

Diversify, relocate and modernize the seating options. The park currently features three wooden picnic tables, all in a row along the fence. Seating should be spread throughout the park, allowing caregivers to choose a location to best watch their children, or for visitors to choose a shady or sunny location. Additionally, seating and tables which meet the standards of the ADA should be provided.
7. PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Recreation is a vital part of a well-balanced lifestyle. During the current pandemic, people are experiencing first-hand the importance of recreation while sheltering in place. With more time available, people are turning to local parks and recreation departments for their online services offering ideas and ways to engage in recreation activities for people of all ages and abilities, most importantly families spending time together. Municipalities will face new challenges and opportunities in how they provide public recreation opportunities and programs following the pandemic. Defining the “new normal” in programs, services and facility use will be a major goal of public recreation providers. The importance of public recreation has been made apparent during the pandemic by the large number of people seeking recreation opportunities in public spaces! The extensive use of public spaces for recreation is spurring discussion nationwide about the importance of supporting municipal parks and recreation as essential to communities, beyond being simply “nice to have”.

RECREATION: MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

People who engage in active healthy lifestyles live longer\(^1\), are in less danger from heart disease and stroke\(^2\), are at significantly reduced risk of cancer\(^3\), and can better combat a wide range of chronic conditions such as diabetes, arthritis, asthma and depression\(^4\). These factors have put people in the highest risk category of the Covid 19 virus. Public recreation is public health. The U.S. Center for Disease Control enlisted local communities to fight against diseases such as heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension by offering easier, plentiful, and convenient programs and places to help citizens increase physical activity. This will help to reduce national health care costs, one of our country’s most pressing challenges as well as unexpected occurrences such as global health crises.

Participation in a broad range of leisure activities can potentially improve physiological and mental health. It contributes to personality development and increases psychological well-being by reducing anxiety and stress. Recreation increases sense of well-being, deters addictions, and assists in the social learning of tolerance and respect for others. Recreation promotes a strong sense of community by providing settings for people to socialize and share common interests. It is a major driver of community interaction and pride.

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Figure 1: Importance of Recreation Opportunities to American Public During 2020

NRPA PARK PULSE
Parks Are Essential, Especially During a Health Crisis

83% of adults find exercising at local parks, trails and open spaces essential to maintaining their mental and physical health during the COVID-19 pandemic.

59% of respondents say it is very or extremely essential to exercise in parks and green spaces to relieve stress and remain healthy during this crisis.

Numerous studies show there are physical and mental health benefits to spending time in green spaces. Local parks, trails and open spaces have recently become even more of a respite from stress. In March 2020, NRPA released a joint statement about using parks and open spaces while maintaining physical distancing. To date, more than 1,000 groups nationwide have signed on to voice support of the safe use of parks during this crisis. Visit www.nrpa.org/Coronavirus for more information.

Each month, through a poll of 1,000 U.S. residents focused on park and recreation issues, NRPA Park Pulse helps tell the park and recreation story. Questions span from the serious to the more lighthearted. The survey was conducted by Wakefield Research (www.wakefieldresearch.com).

Visit nrpa.org/ParkPulse for more information.
Figure 1 presents the findings of a nationwide survey conducted in April of 2020 about the importance of parks and recreation opportunities during the Covid-19 crisis. Only six weeks into the public health crisis, more than 1,000 groups nationwide signed on to support the National Recreation & Park Association’s statement on the safe use of parks during the pandemic. In a community such as East Whiteland Township, isolation can be a major issue among the elderly, care-givers, those who work alone, people who commute long hours, and especially among younger generations who are digital natives and spend extensive amounts of time on the internet with limited social interaction. In an article in the Harvard Business Review, Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, former Surgeon General of the United States, wrote, “Loneliness and weak social connections are associated with a reduction in lifespan similar to that caused by smoking 15 cigarettes a day and even greater than that associated with obesity.” Public recreation can help to reduce the isolation of many residents in East Whiteland Township.

RECREATION TRENDS

The trends emerging in East Whiteland Township include the desire for more programs and events, pickle ball, and cricket. Residents are also participating in organized recreation programs sponsored by East Goshen and using recreation facilities such as parks in Malvern and the destination playground in East Goshen, it is evident that having more programs and facilities such as a destination playground close to home would benefit the residents. Since it is important to maximize all public resources, avoiding duplication of services including recreation programs warrants exploration of multi-municipal recreation programming. The National Recreation and Park Association provides information on the top trends in parks and recreation annually. These trends cover not only recreation programs but also the very real concerns and issues that communities face that are related to parks and recreation operations and public service. The general recreation trends are:

- **Investment** in parks and recreation is increasing for the first time since 2008.
- **More technology**: Beacon counters, drones, monitoring of park visitors, biometric monitoring at facility entrances, and charting of park management such as control of invasive species.
- **Esports**: Esports is a form of recreation in which spectators essentially sit and watch individuals and teams compete in a variety of electronic sports. Esports draw teens and young adults into recreation venues. Esports events and tournaments have revenue potential as well as the potential to reach hard to reach audience.
- **Dogs**: Dog parks are the fastest growing type of recreation facility.
- **Pickleball**: Departments nationwide report not being able to build enough pickleball courts fast enough to meet this trend.
- **Yoga**: All kinds of yoga featuring animals as participants – goats, puppies, pigs and who knows what else.

Nearby municipalities such as East Coventry have embraced pickleball as a sport and social activity for residents of all ages.
• **Libraries**, health services, social services and after-school care are all in parks and recreation facilities. Walkable/bikeable access, intergenerational programs, healthcare, childcare can all be incorporated into a unified location through parks and recreation providing ultimate convenience for the public.

• **Nonbinary gender identification**: Increasing gender equality is a major effort of parks and recreation agencies adopting inclusive polices and engagement of the LGBTQ+ community.

• **Opioid Abuse in Parks**: Parks and Recreation Departments are increasing efforts to ensure safety of park visitors and maintenance staff as well as forging partnerships with health departments and others to work toward prevention of addiction.

One of the main interests of the community as found in work sessions, interviews and public meetings is recreation opportunities for teens and young adults. Figure 2 presents a list with the activities of interest for Millennials to Gen Z ages 13 – 36: This list can be used to plan recreation programs targeted at this age group. Using social media following the township’s social media policy can help to increase public awareness about these programs and increase participation in them.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Figure 2. Recreational Interests of Gen Y Through Millennials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Music / Playing an instrument</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Gaming</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Cooking / Baking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Fitness – Yoga, Pilates. Running is down.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. TV / Netflix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Dance</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


RECREATION OPPORTUNITIES

Most recreation occurs as citizens engage in their own interests on their own schedule, such as using the regional bicycle trail system, walking, playing in township parks and on park play equipment, gathering in pavilions, and enjoying playing and watching sports on ballfields and game courts. In addition to self-directed recreation, residents can also participate in organized scheduled programs. Research for this plan found that township programs are popular. Summer camp operates at capacity. Residents are using organized programs outside of the Township as well so there is certainly opportunity and interest in more organized programs in East Whiteland.

Overview

Although East Whiteland Township does not have a parks and recreation department, the Parks and Recreation Board provides basic recreation opportunities in significant ways beyond only organized programs with support from the Director of Property and Recreation. The four major ways that East Whiteland Township advances parks and recreation opportunities include the following:

1. Facilitation of Recreation – The Township facilitates recreation by providing parks and recreation facilities and trails open to the public at no charge for general recreation at their own discretion every day of the year. The Parks and Recreation Board and the Director of Property and Recreation pay attention to community recreation trends and public interests. As a result, the Township is exploring the striping of tennis courts to accommodate pickle ball and locating facilities for cricket.

2. Partnerships – East Whiteland Township works with community-based organizations such as Friends of the Summer Stage, neighboring municipalities, the library, and leagues that offer a variety of sports to the residents. The Township provides the use of ballfields in Battle of the Clouds.

3. Promotion – East Whiteland Township can promote recreation opportunities through its website and other means of outreach such as e-mail blasts. The Township is developing a policy on the use of social media. Social media is an essential means of promoting recreation opportunities. This is a topic being discussed by the Parks and Recreation Board as they would like to use and follow the Township’s social media policy to increase public awareness about parks and recreation programs.

4. Organized Scheduled Programs – The Parks and Recreation Board oversees the provision of summer recreation programming and special events.
ORGANIZED PROGRAMS

The Township offers limited yet important organized recreation programs that respect the capacity of the Township’s Parks and Recreation Board members as volunteers. The East Whiteland Township Director of Property and Recreation spends about 25 percent of his time on parks and recreation and this includes all park planning and projects as well as oversight of programs. Then Township’s programs include Summer Camp, the and the summer concert season.

East Whiteland Township Summer Camp
East Whiteland Township offers a four-week Summer Camp for up to 120 children who have completed kindergarten through sixth grade. The camp is held in a Great Valley School District school so that indoor and outdoor facilities are available. The fee is $500 for the first child and $475 for additional children. A limited number of spaces is available for non-residents for $580. The Camp offers sports, games, arts, crafts, music, and special events.

Discount Ticket Sales
The Township sells discount tickets that residents can purchase to use at theme parks, zoos, ski areas, movie theaters, and other commercial venues.

PARTNERSHIPS

Partnerships enable more opportunities for the residents of East Whiteland Township than the Township could provide on its own.

Summer Stage

The Friends of Summer Stage is a non-profit organization established to provide summer concert events to the East Whiteland community in cooperation with East Whiteland Township Parks & Recreation. The summer concert series is very popular. It is held on four Wednesdays in Valley Creek park. The concert series also include a beer garden as a fundraiser. The Friends of Summer Stage enlist sponsors to help offset costs. East Whiteland Township and about four businesses serve as sponsors.

GO WilMa!

GO WilMa! is an exciting and entertaining summer outdoor adventure program that encourages children in Willistown, Malvern, East Whiteland Township and East Goshen Township to explore the natural and historic treasures of the area through a series of scavenger hunts. Children and their families and friends participate on their own schedule throughout the summer. Children are automatically signed up for GO WilMa! when they register for the Summer Quest summer program at Malvern or Paoli Library. They earn a GO WilMa! patch similar to those earned by Boy and Girl Scouts for completing six outdoor adventures. GO WilMa! combines parks and recreation, health and wellness, reading, and lots of fresh air fun. This program won an Excellence in Programming award from the Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society. This prestigious award underscores the high quality of this program being one of the best recreation programs in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
Great Valley Senior Center
The Great Valley Senior Center operates weekdays in the Covenant Presbyterian Church in Malvern. It serves East Whiteland residents as part of the Great Valley School District. The mission of is to pride people 60 years of age and older with services that meet their educational and social needs, enhance their dignity, support their independence and encourage their involvement in the community. The Center provides a place for seniors to gather for educational courses as well as social activities that include card games, dancing, exercise, puzzles, local trips to museums, gardens, historical sites, etc.

Other Community Based Organizations

Organizations such as scouts undertake projects for the public good. An example is a girl scout requesting permission to install and manage a “free little library” in a park. The Parks and Recreation Board welcomes and carefully evaluates proposals for recreation related projects.

Organized Sports
Volunteer sports leagues operate in the vicinity beyond the borders of any one jurisdiction serving participants from multiple municipalities. East Whiteland Township residents participate in the following organizations with participation numbers where available:

- Great Valley Little League offers baseball, softball and Challenger. Battle of the Clouds is one of the venues for this league.
- Greater Chester Valley Soccer Association is a community-based soccer program serving the Greater Chester Valley in Pennsylvania focused on the enjoyment of the game. We are committed to the development of soccer and multi-sport players both on and off the field for participants ranging in age from three years old through 12th grade. An adult summer league is offered in the summer. The league owns the Line Road Soccer Complex in Malvern. It has 14 fields of various sizes to accommodate all age groups.
- Great Valley Basketball League serves youth in the Great Valley area using school gyms.
- Lionville Youth Association is located about 15 minutes from East Whiteland Township in Uwchlan Township. Their sports include soccer, lacrosse, baseball, softball, Challenger, field hockey, and basketball. While the Association operates regionally, some sports are only open to residents of the Downingtown Area School District.

Many East Whiteland Township residents are interested in a cricket facility. Research for this plan found that more than 100 cricket teams are within this area of Chester County and they are seeking fields for play. Municipalities are just beginning to explore the provision of cricket fields. Their large size is about 4.4 acres compared with 1.7 acres for a soccer field. The length of time that cricket games take also
requires serious planning on public property to facilitate equitable use by various teams and sports.

**Great Valley School District**

The School District offers use of school for East Whiteland Township’s Summer Camp. The District also provides clubs and activities for the students after school. The District also allows use of school facilities for public recreation. Ballfields and gymnasiums are particularly important for organized sports use. The link below is to the Great Valley School District’s Use of Facilities Policy including its fee schedule. East Whiteland Township falls in the Class C Facility Use group. The Superintendent is permitted to waive fees where deemed appropriate.

[https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/gvsd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=B6VMLG5AE120](https://go.boarddocs.com/pa/gvsd/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=B6VMLG5AE120)

**PRIVATE SECTOR PROVIDERS**

**Great Valley Community Organization**

The Great Valley Community Organization is a 501(c) (3) nonprofit organization driven by its core of dedicated volunteers. GVCO helps build a strong, vibrant, and connected community by providing facilities, activities and programs enriching the lives of all local residents. GVCO is an outgrowth of the Great Valley Basketball League (GVBL) that started in 2001 with 60 girls. Since its inception, GVCO has grown, offering programs in basketball, football, sideline cheer, volleyball, crew, girls youth lacrosse, pickleball and competitive cheer annually. In recent years, GVCO has expanded to include tutoring, arts, senior programs, community, and educational events as well as new sports to serve the entire Great Valley community. Since GVCO’s

beginnings more than a decade ago, the Great Valley population has increased by nearly 150% and had changed dramatically, both in terms of demographics and the growing demand for additional youth, adult and senior programming. GVCO’s vision is to evolve GVCO from one of the area’s premier sports/recreational programs to a world-class community resource that delivers a broad range of sports, educational, arts, recreational and senior programs that address key community needs. GVCO has been undertaking fundraising to construct a 40,000 SF community center on Bacton Hill Road with construction slated for. It will include court space, mezzanine level viewing, elevated walking track, fitness center, outdoor courts, café area, meeting rooms, multi-purpose classrooms, a performance stage, a large room for cheer/dance, dressing rooms and much more. Outdoor plans in Phase One include a generous parking area, open practice fields, amphitheater, outdoor picnic area, and convenient access to the Chester Valley Trail.

Chester Valley Golf Club

The Chester Valley Golf Club is a private membership-based club. It has a 24,000-square-foot Clubhouse with patio and deck overlooking the beautifully landscaped greens and water feature views, an 18-hole, ‘classic’
championship golf course, newly renovated practice range, putting green and short game practice facility, a golf shop, outdoor pool and children’s wading pool with competitive swim program, tennis facilities with five courts, competitive play, pro shop, lessons and clinics, two platform tennis courts with warming hut and competitive paddle program, dining facilities, and flexible function space including ballroom and private event rooms.

ANALYSIS

The analysis of recreation programs and opportunities includes East Whiteland Township’s strength, challenges, opportunities, and threats.

Strengths

- The Director of Property and Recreation provides enthusiastic support for recreation programs and services. He dedicates about a quarter of his time to parks and recreation.
- The Parks and Recreation Board provides high quality programming within their capacity as volunteers.
- The Township hires a Summer Camp Director who works on the camp throughout the year planning the camp from October until the Camp begins then switches to full time management for the four week program. The Summer Camp is a very high quality operation that parents and participants report favorable reviews for.
- The Parks and Recreation Board anticipates trends and proposes ways to address them. The Township supports the Board’s recommendation as evident in the installation of a Gaga pit and re-striping of tennis courts for pickle ball.
- The recreation partnerships result in important programs that the Township could not afford to provide on its own such as organized sports, a summer concert series, and facilities such as gyms and schools.
- Other township’s allow East Whiteland residents to participate there.
- The Township provides facilities for people to use on their own for recreation which is how most people recreate. The Township works hard at planning and developing facilities to meet public needs and interests.

Challenges

- The main challenge at the time of this plan preparation is determining how to re-open and restore recreation programs, services and use of facilities for recreation as a result of the pandemic. The National Recreation and Park Association, the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, the Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society, the Pennsylvania Department of Health will be offering guidelines and methods as the recovery from Covid 19 occurs.
- Without a parks and recreation department, the Township as limited capacity to provide a full-slate of recreation programs. The Director of Property and Recreation has extensive demands on his time.
- Without a recreation professional, best practices are not in place such as summer
recreation leader training, ongoing summer camp and summer stage evaluations, and services primarily to age groups beyond school age children.

- Attracting qualified staff for the Summer Camp is a challenge and more college age workers should be recruited. High hourly wages for part-time workers in the area are typically much higher than wages for part-time municipal workers making recruiting qualified staff difficult.

- Some facility limitations such as land for cricket and game courts for both tennis and pickle ball present challenges that should be explored in the future.

- Methods for promotion and increasing public awareness are limited. The website needs updating. The newsletter is no longer distributed. A social media policy needs to be put in place.

- Promotion of parks and recreation opportunities is difficult with limited staff time.

- Determining the difference between what GVCO will provide and public recreation needs should be determined as well as how the Township can collaborate with GVCO on public recreation opportunities and programs.

**Opportunities**

Expanding public recreation programs through partnerships has significant potential. These include:

- Multi-Municipal partnerships with East Goshen, Malvern, Willistown, Charlestown, and Exton.

- National and state recreation and health organizations are providing useful information on how to re-open parks and recreation programs post-pandemic.

- GVCO could be a collaborator with the Township that might be an alternative to township recreation program provision.

- Residents interested in cricket could be engaged in planning for future facilities and cricket play.

- Post-pandemic may yield new government public works programs and grants along with lower construction prices to enable the Township to undertake park improvement projects that will enhance recreational opportunities for the community.

- Capitalizing on the new-found importance of parks and recreation as a result of the increased use of the outdoors close to home by the public.
Threats

- Safe re-opening of parks, recreation facilities and programs.
- Potential reduction in financial support for recreation.
- Potential reductions in discretionary income due to lost income and jobs that will prevent households from paying recreation fees and charges.
- Demand for services for children as parents return to work without commensurate support to provide the needed recreation services.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations provide a supportive match for the current and future aspirations of how East Whiteland Township envisions providing recreation programs and opportunities now and in the future.

1. **The Township should empower the Director of Property and Recreation in concert with the Parks and Recreation Board to discuss and develop strategies for operating a parks and recreation system in light of the current pandemic.**

2. **Promote parks, recreation facilities and trails.**
   a. Update the website with a focus on parks and recreation programs and opportunities.
   b. Establish a township policy on social media.
   c. Use social media to increase public awareness on parks and recreation opportunities. Develop a policy on using social media on a regular basis for parks and recreation programs and designate the responsible parties and their roles.

3. **Continue to support the efforts of community-based organizations for leagues, the summer concert series, and future proposed projects.**

4. **Consider exploring a partnership on recreation programming with an adjoining municipality (ies).**
   a. Consider this partnership as a way to undertake the post-pandemic re-opening of parks, recreation facilities
and programs. The more regional this work is, the easier the transition will be for the individual municipalities rather than going alone on the reopening.

b. Send a representative to the regional meetings of parks and recreation departments in Chester County or PRPS District III to keep up to date on recreation trends and program opportunities.

5. **Institute best management practices in the Summer Camp.**

   a. Develop and provide leadership training.

   b. Research wage rates of area businesses to determine the level of wages necessary to attract qualified seasonal staff. Adjust wages accordingly and set program fees in line. This may take time and require phasing in. This is a problem common to all public parks and recreation departments statewide.

   c. Establish and institute a program evaluation system that is conducted annually and with weekly interim check-ins with participants and parents to make course corrections as needed.

6. **Hold an annual summit of all related recreation providers in East Whiteland Township.** Include sports, Friends of Summer Stage, Go WilMa!, GVCO, Surrey Services, the Great Valley School District, the Chester Valley Golf Club, the Library, and neighboring parks and recreation departments. Discuss what is working well, what could work better, and if there are any action steps to take to enhance public parks and recreation services.
8. FINANCING, ORGANIZATION, AND OPERATIONS

East Whiteland Township has a budget philosophy rooted in a deep sense of responsibility to the taxpayers and a strong commitment to excellent public service. The Township supports parks, recreation, and open space as evident in undertaking this plan, the improvement of township parks, master planning the development of Bacton Hill Park, and the successful pursuit of grant funding for park improvements.

While East Whiteland Township’s economic climate has been very strong, the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic of 2020 on municipal operations is yet to be determined as officials begin to grapple with ramping up to our “new normal”. With the economy largely closed for a portion of 2020, township officials are being even more cautious regarding budgeting than ever.

We all need parks. Parks are a critical part of our public health infrastructure. Use of green spaces is associated with decreased health complaints, improved blood pressure and cholesterol levels, reduced stress, improved general health conditions and a greater ability to face problems. Investment in our parks is necessary as they are critical to our quality of life and offer multiple, quantifiable vital benefits.

FINANCING, ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONS IN CONTEXT

The purpose of the Financing, Organization, and Operations assessment is to review how the parks and recreation system is supported, managed, and directed toward meeting community goals with respect to the Township’s resources as well as alternative means such as fees and charges, rentals, grants, gifts, and donations. For the purposes of this plan, it is important to look at the organizational structure, budget, and operations that were appropriated as the baseline with consideration of changes that are resulting from the Covid-19 pandemic. Many practices and procedures will result in significant changes in how public parks and recreation is managed based on evolving health and safety guidelines.

BUDGET PROCESS

In East Whiteland Township, the budget planning is a collaborative process among the Board of Supervisors, township management and department heads with input from advisory boards and committees. The Township advertises all budget meetings and opens them to the public. Township administration reviews the five-year plan with input from department heads and makes revisions as needed. The Township starts the budget process in September with discussions with the Board of Supervisors and
staff working toward drafting the budget in October. In November, the preliminary budget is established for review and discussion. The Township advertises the preliminary budget for public review. In December, the Board of Supervisors considers and approves the budget for the next fiscal year.

CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS AND OPERATING BUDGET

The two major financing needs are capital improvements for open space, parks, recreation facility and trail improvements and the operating budget for daily functions. The capital improvement budget should include all projects estimated to cost more than $10,000 and planned to last more than five years. The operating budget should include the costs of daily operation of the parks and recreation system and include things like personnel, salaries, wages and benefits.

Capital Improvement Fund

In East Whiteland Township, the Park Development Fund provides the framework for capital investment. Table 1 presents the East Whiteland Township Park Development Fund for years 2020 - 2016. At present, the Township has about $770,000 available for capital improvement projects which could be used for park development or improvements as well as for the purchase of equipment and materials would be considered as major capital improvements. At present, there is no five to seven year Capital Improvement Program for parks and recreation. Improvements are discussed and formulated in response to pressing needs and emerging opportunities.

A Capital Improvement Program is the scheduling of selected physical plans and facilities for the Township over a certain period of time. These improvements are based on established priorities, according to the need or desire for such improvements, and according to the Township's present and anticipated financial resources from a variety of sources. Since the Township has limited resources to devote to improving community facilities, they have integrated capital improvement planning into the process of programming the park, recreation, open space and trail improvements. The Township uses this process to decide which projects are most important to the community, and when they should be implemented. Even if the Capital Improvement Program were to be nothing more than a listing of proposed projects, the benefits of this (in contrast to sporadic requests in response to pressing circumstances, proposals from community based groups, or an interested person's good idea) is immeasurable. It presents at one time, instead of in piecemeal fashion, the roughly anticipated major capital expenditures for the community in parks, recreation, open space, and trails.
Table 1. Park Development Fund 2020 - 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenues</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interest</td>
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<td>Grants</td>
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<td>42,000</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>Park Development Fees-in-Lieu</td>
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<td>230,500</td>
<td>319,112</td>
<td>16,500 (Projected)</td>
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<td>Miscellaneous Revenue</td>
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<td>1,270</td>
<td>5,000</td>
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<td>Transfers from Capital Improvement</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>400,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenditures</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional &amp; Consulting Services</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>13,312</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capital Park Development Fund</td>
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<td>523,371</td>
<td>205,114</td>
<td>200,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>Banking/Management Fees</td>
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<td></td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total Revenue</td>
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<td>254,048</td>
<td>326,352</td>
<td>198,000</td>
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<td>Total Expense</td>
<td>1,523,000</td>
<td>109,065</td>
<td>121,238</td>
<td>200,000</td>
<td>185,646</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Operating Budget

The operating budget supports the daily operation of the parks and recreation system. The largest category is personnel covering salaries, wages, and benefits. East Whiteland Township’s operations budget is funded through taxes, user fees & charges, and partnerships/sponsorships. Table 2 presents the operating budget for years 2020 – 2016.

East Whiteland Township is in the process of developing its parks and recreation system and following the traditional path of operating a summer youth recreation program, holding some special events, supporting community based organizations that provide recreation, and making the Public Works Department responsible for maintenance. As such, park maintenance is undertaken by Public Works staff. There is no workload tracking that identifies the tasks and time spent caring for township parks and recreation facilities. Given the fact that the parks consistently look clean and cared for, the Township invests in their care. The planning team held work sessions with the Township park management and maintenance workers to determine their estimate of time spent in the parks on maintenance. The best estimate is logical and reasonable at two full time equivalent Public Works workers spent on park maintenance. In addition, it is likely that the Director of Property and Recreation spends about 25 percent of his time planning, directing, and managing parks and recreation system operation as well as coordinating public engagement, customer service and grant writing for parks and recreation improvements. The projected value of this estimated time is included in Table 2.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table 2 Recreation and Park Maintenance Operating Budget 2020 - 2016</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Revenues</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Park Fees and Permits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summer Recreation Program Fees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discount Ticket Program</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| **Expenses**                                                   |
| General Recreation Programs                                    |
| Discount Ticket Program  | 10,000 | 1,603  | 6,630  | 8,378  | 11,395 |
| Insurance - Liability  | 3,700  | 3,413  | 3,231  | 3,375  | 2,940  |
| Park Activities & Programs  | 15,000 | 10,000 | 11,535 | 10,175 | 11,500 |
| Other Expenses  | 250    | 240    | 120    | 960    | 0      |
| **TOTAL**                                                      | 28,950 | 15,256 | 21,516 | 22,888 | 25,835 |

| **Summer Recreation Programs**                                 |
| Salary/Wages - Professional  | 48,000 | 45,287 | 20,054 | 21,427 | 21,925 |
| Drug & Alcohol Program  | 1,500  | 1,035  | 696    | 843    | 1,288  |
| FICA  | 4,000  | 3,472  | 1,534  | 1,639  | 1,665  |
| Overtime  | 500    | 104    | 0      | 0      | 0      |
| Supplies – Summer Recreation  | 8,100  | 7,650  | 4,180  | 5,018  | 4,565  |
| Computer Services  | 5,450  | 2,895  | 2,895  | 5,235  | 0      |
| Advertising Printing  | 500    | 459    | 94     | 0      | 677    |
| New Equipment Summer Rec  | 0      | 0      | 500    | 0      | 0      |
| **TOTAL**                                                      | 68,050 | 60,902 | 29,953 | 34,162 | 30,120 |

| **Parks Maintenance**                                          |
| Park House  | 1300 | 0 | 1325 | 830 | 496 |
| Utilities  | 1200 | 650 | 700 | 1887 | 990 |
| Electric  | 2000 | 2,437 | 629 | -141 | 491 |
| Park System: Mulch, Cleaning, Supplies  | 27,600 | 18,671 | 11,561 | 22,204 | 13,528 |
| Buildings – Maint. & Repair  | 9,000 | 2,024 | 4,045 | 0 | 0 |
| Park House Siding on Kitchen  | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3,331 | 1,453 |
| **TOTAL**                                                      | 41,100 | 23,782 | 18,260 | 28,393 | 16,958 |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Estimated</strong></th>
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<th>Two Full-time Equivalent Workers at $40 salary and benefits</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Estimated:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Park &amp; Recreation Administration 25% of Director of Property and Recreation</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Estimated:</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>Estimated Salary and Benefit for Parks and Recreation Maintenance &amp; Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$206,600</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 presents the total budget for recreation programs and services, park maintenance, and the estimated value of wages and benefits for staff time devoted to maintenance, planning, managing, coordinating public engagement and customer service, and grant writing for the parks and recreation system.
Table 3 Parks and Recreation Operating Budget 2020 - 2016

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Revenues</td>
<td>75,500</td>
<td>73,882</td>
<td>41,703</td>
<td>42,425</td>
<td>47,486</td>
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<tr>
<td>Expenses</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recreation Programs</td>
<td>97,000</td>
<td>76,158</td>
<td>51,469</td>
<td>57,050</td>
<td>55,955</td>
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<tr>
<td>Park Maintenance</td>
<td>41,100</td>
<td>23,132</td>
<td>16,235</td>
<td>27,411</td>
<td>16,958</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Value of Staff Time</td>
<td>206,600</td>
<td>206,600</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
<td>NA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL Expenses</td>
<td>344,700</td>
<td>305,890</td>
<td>67,704 w/o labor</td>
<td>84,461 w/o labor</td>
<td>72,913 w/o labor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Donation: Friends of Summer Stage</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Budget Facts and Figures

East Whiteland Township has been increasing its commitment and investment in parks and recreation over the last five years as shown in Table 3. Without estimated maintenance and management labor costs, the Township has nearly doubled its base costs of Recreation Programs and Park Maintenance. The Township is also significantly increasing its investment in labor by adding another maintenance position in 2020. These positive trends are indicative of East Whiteland Township’s commitment to its growing parks and recreation system.

Benchmarks are useful comparisons for municipalities to put investment in parks and recreation into perspective. There are no right or wrong answers, merely information to increase understanding about parks and recreation operations for planning, resource allocation, and policy formulation purposes.

With a population of 12,402, East Whiteland Township invests $27.79 per capita in parks and recreation. The average municipal per capita investment in parks and recreation in Pennsylvania is about $36. The Township’s operating budget without debt service is $13,812,691 including a parks and recreation budget of $344,700 which includes the estimated value of wages and benefits for the hours spent on maintenance and parks and recreation system planning and management. Parks and recreation is 2.5 percent (2.5%) of the municipal budget. The Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources recommends that municipalities devote five percent (5%) or more to parks and recreation. The Township has 102.31 acres of parkland. Based on the maintenance budget and estimated work hour value, the Township is investing about $2,428 per acre for park maintenance overall. It is likely that this average per acre cost varies by the type of park maintenance required by different types of parks and the level of development within the parks with higher per acre costs in active facilities such as Battle of the Clouds versus more naturalized areas.

The Township increased revenues significantly in 2019 mainly by extending the summer recreation program from a half day to a full day. Current guidelines for summer recreation programs are evolving as a result of the public health crisis resulting from Covid-19. As future operating regulations are clarified the Township should set a goal for the summer programs to generate revenues. The first full-day camp in 2019 was very successful and it is
likely that it could be expanded and generate more revenues to offset operating costs and provide other programs. Parks and recreation departments typically generate 35 percent of their operating costs through non-tax sources and very skilled departments generate even more. In its current configuration, recreation recovers about 78 percent of its costs. Parks and recreation as a whole generates about 22 percent in cost recovery. East Whiteland is in a positive position for a community of 12,402 with part-time recreation program services and park maintenance in Public Works.

**ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONS**

**Elected Officials Set Policy and Budget**

As a Township of the Second Class, the Board of Supervisors acts as the executive and legislative branch of township government. They are responsible for setting policy and approving all township matters that require official action including the adoption of ordinances and setting the budget. The three-member Board of Supervisors is elected at-large, each member serving six-year terms.

The Board of Supervisors is empowered to appoint professionals to assist it in the daily operation of Township business and to provide advice and counsel on technical matters. Additionally, the Board appoints all members of various boards and commissions including the Environmental Advisory Committee, Historical Commission, Parks & Recreation Board, Planning Commission, and the Zoning Hearing Board.

**Township Management Carries Out Policy**

The Township Manager is responsible for the administrative functions of the Township and implementing the policy set forth by the Board of Supervisors. The manager oversees a staff of about 72 people in Administration, Codes & Life Safety, Finance, Public Works, Planning & Development, Police, and Public Works.

**Parks and Recreation Administration**

Parks and Recreation functions are split between two departments: Property & Recreation and the Public Works Department. The Director of Property and Recreation plans, manages, and directs parks and recreation planning and programming, engages the public and provides customer service for parks and recreation, and grant writing. The Public Works Department is responsible for park maintenance among its other functions. The Public Works Director is responsible for park maintenance. The Department undertakes park improvement projects and routine maintenance as well as issuing permits for facility use.
Interdepartmental Coordination

The Property & Recreation Director and the Public Works Director work collaboratively to ensure that parks are safe, clean, functional and operating in accordance with recreation program scheduling. They also coordinate with the Parks & Recreation Board, the EAC and the Planning Commission to advance Township initiatives.

Figure 1. East Whiteland Township Organizational Structure Related to Parks, Recreation, Open Space and Trails

East Whiteland is a Township of the Second Class and is governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania set forth in P.L. 103, No. 69 Cl. 73. Figure 1 presents the Township’s organizational structure related to parks, recreation, open space, and trails.

Parks and Recreation Related Boards, Commissions and Committees

Three township committees perform functions related to open space, parks, recreation, and trails: Parks & Recreation Board, Environmental Advisory Council, and Planning Commission.

Parks & Recreation Board

This volunteer organization operates in one of the fastest growing counties and townships in the state. The seven-member board has set forth goals that include:

- Open space acquisition
- Improving existing parks and creating new ones
- Recreational programming
- Trail development
- Partnerships to create stewards of the Township public lands
Environmental Advisory Council

The Environmental Advisory Council (EAC) provides advice to the Board of Supervisors and other Township boards and commissions, including, but not limited to, the Planning Commission and the Parks and Recreation Board. The EAC coordinates its activities with all appropriate agencies, boards and commissions. The EAC provides technical expertise on environmental aspects of subdivisions and land developments and provides environmental advice on specific projects or properties upon request of the Board of Supervisors or the Planning Commission. They recommend plans and programs, including proposed ordinances or ordinance amendments, to promote and conserve the Township’s natural resources and to protect and improve and the quality of the environment. They explore sources of funding, including such as gifts and grants. The EAC consults with the Township Solicitor regarding legal implications connected with receiving funding from sources other than the Township. The EAC is empowered to:

- Identify environmental problems
- Recommend plans and programs for the promotion and conservation of natural resources and for the protection and improvement of the quality of the Township’s environment
- Recommend potential use of open land areas within the Township
- Promote a community environmental program
- Keep an index of all open areas, publicly or privately owned, including, but not limited to, flood-prone areas, swamps and other natural areas within the Township and to obtain information on the proper use of such areas; and
- Advise the appropriate agencies, boards, commissions, and elected officials of the

Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is a seven-member board appointed by the Board of Supervisors for four-year, staggered terms. Meetings and procedures are governed by the Municipalities Planning Code of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, as well as the Township Subdivision & Land Development Ordinance. The Commission makes recommendations to the Board of Supervisors, which retains all approval authority.

The Planning Commission reviews:

- Township Comprehensive Plan and amendments such as the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan
- Subdivision and Land Development Plans
- Conditional Use Applications
- Lot Line Changes
Requests for Waivers

Board, Committee, and Commission Operations

As shown in the description of the groups above, these volunteers have overlapping responsibilities including open space, trails, parks, and natural resource conservation. When this plan was undertaken, the Board of Supervisors appointed an Advisory Committee to help guide the development of the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan that included representation from the Parks & Recreation Board and the Board of Supervisors. Discussions, interviews, and work sessions for this plan found that the Township is blessed with a strong sense of volunteerism in this community that could be optimally harnessed with a strategic communication system. Given related missions and responsibilities, roles are unclear among the various boards. Differences of opinion and miscommunication are bound to happen. A constructive and dynamic board culture would enable all board members and township management to discuss issues in common. Continuously striving to improve communication and collaboration will foster ideas, opportunities and solutions that perhaps no one board would on its own. This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan sets forth a common vision, mission and goals for open space, parks, recreation and trails along with a strategy for all to work toward in common. Discussions in the planning process found that all existing committees are needed and that an Open Space Review Board should be established. Each committee should contribute significantly to the Township’s success in achieving its vision as defined in the Township’s Comprehensive Plan to be a community that:

- Conserves open space for enjoyment of future generations and enhancement of community character.
- Values and protects historic, natural and scenic resources for their vital role in township identity, health, recreation and green infrastructure
- Invests in a growing network of trails, bike paths, sidewalks and pathways that facilitates safe and convenient walking and biking around the Township for work, school and recreation
- Includes energy conservation as an integral component of policy decisions affecting land use and transportation, municipal operations and community services.
- Provides local governance and services in an open, efficient and fiscally sound manner that supports the Township’s high quality of life.
- Seeks to increase opportunities for regional cooperation and collaboration that will result in more innovative and efficient provision of services, effective protection of regional resources, and maintain capacity for growth and development.

The goal of the Township in managing its committees should be to ensure that:

1. Every committee remains necessary.
2. Each committee’s purpose is clear and that all members understand the purpose of their committee. In areas of overlap, clearly define the responsibilities and roles of each committee. This applies to open space, trails, parks and natural resource conservation. Each board, commission, and committee should define its exact role with respect to the topic and how the committee coordinates with other boards, commissions, and committees. Regarding this Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan, the implementation of the recommendations should guide all committees who would work in concert to move the action plan forward.
3. Strong leaders knowledgeable in the subject area are appointed and supported by members with skill sets related to the necessary tasks and functions of the committee.
4. An annual self-evaluation of each board and committee is performed prior to budget season.

5. Meetings are run effectively. Consider virtual meetings where possible.

6. Communication is effective within and between the committees. The Township must establish ways for the boards, commissions and committees to keep in touch between meetings about items of importance and information that others need to know about.

7. The vision, mission, goals, and strategies of adopted plans including the Comprehensive Plan and the Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan guide all committee operations, discussions, and recommendations.

**Optimizing Board Performance**

To ensure that information is exchanged regularly, the Township must implement effective mechanisms to formalize the communication process. Work sessions with the Plan Advisory Committee, Parks & Recreation Board and township management generated the idea to form the PROS Action Team with one representative of each committee, board, and commission to meet on a defined schedule (such as quarterly) to discuss issues, opportunities and concerns in common and decide upon actions to be undertaken as a result.

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**PROS Action Team**

**Mission:** Optimize communication among Parks & Recreation Board, EAC, Planning Commission, and Open Space & Trail Committee to advance adopted plans
**Open Space Review Board**

The Township should establish an Open Space Review Board. The board would be tasked with coordination on open space and trails including developing a process to help identify potential open-space properties and trails. The board should work with the Board of Supervisors and township administration to develop procedures to acquire and maintain open space and trails. Since open space and trail acquisition projects are initially legal transactions negotiated with developers or property owners, the Solicitor will advise the Township on process and negotiations.

**Term Limits**

Maintaining the brain trust of experienced board members while securing fresh perspectives is the lifeblood of high performing boards and committees. Term limits for members can help achieve this mix of experience and new ideas. Term limits could be established on a three year rotating basis in which a set number of board members roll off the board for at least one year and are replaced with a combination of experienced former board members and new members who have not served on the board in the past. After their one-year hiatus, previous board members would be welcome to apply to re-join the board for another three-year term. They may or may not be re-appointed depending upon the pool of applicants and the needs of the Township at the time.

**FINANCING, ORGANIZATION, AND OPERATIONS ANALYSIS**

**Strengths**

East Whiteland Township has a strong commitment to enhancing the quality of life in the community through parks, recreation, trails, and the conservation of open space. This is evident in the actions of elected and appointed officials in supporting park development and improvements, undertaking this plan, increasing investment in parks and recreation, expanding recreation programs, and supporting park maintenance operations.

**Benchmarking Our Strength**

Since the Township is in the process of establishing and growing a true parks and recreation system, looking at a model of successful parks and recreation systems elsewhere would provide some benchmarks for guidance on moving forward. The Trust for Public Land has provided a model for successful parks and recreation systems with seven key factors.

These seven factors below include commentary on how they apply to East Whiteland Township’s strengths and offer a framework for the Township to use in evaluating its progress in providing public parks and recreation services, trails, and the conservation of open space.

**A Clear Expression of Purpose** – This Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan sets forth the vision, mission, goals, and recommendations for a plan of action over the next ten years.

**Ongoing Planning and Community Involvement** – East Whiteland Township has four committees, boards and commissions devoted to parks, recreation, open space, trails and environmental conservation. Most municipalities experience challenges in even forming one committee! The committees have passionate citizens with community and subject matter expertise that helps to
foster wise decisions that advance stewardship of parks, recreation, open space and trails.

**Sufficient Assets in Land, Staffing, and Equipment to meet the system’s goals –**
This factor is commonly a work in progress among all parks and recreation systems. As a nearly fully developed municipality, keeping pace with sufficient assets remains a challenge and will continue. With 102 acres of parkland, the Township’s ratio of 8.5 acres of parkland per 1,000 residents falls short of the typical standard of 10.5 acres. By 2040, the Township would need another 38 acres of parkland to meet this minimum standard. The Township has been increasing its financial support and staffing for parks and recreation over the last five years. In 2019, the Township successfully won several grants for park improvements. Given the Township’s level of development and shortage of parkland, making the best use of every park and connection is crucially important for this community. The benchmarks presented for the budget with revenues and expenditures show important favorable trends. Revenues have been increasing from non-tax sources and the Township has been successful in securing grant funding. Working toward the per capita investment and ratio of the parks and recreation budget to the Township budget provides a framework for growing support as the Township expands and improves its parks, recreation, and trails system and strengthens natural resource management.

**Equitable access –** Diversity is in fact one of the Township’s primary goals for parks and recreation. The Township works closely with the Malvern Mom’s Club on planning facilities that foster accessibility and welcoming parks for all. The Parks and Recreation Department plans programs and development policy to ensure that the community has equitable access to facilities and programs. All park improvements feature barrier free access. A new playground is being planned at Bacton Hill Park that is being designed to be inclusive.

**User satisfaction –** Citizens polled in a public meeting indicated the importance of parks, recreation, trails, and open space conservation. The Summer Recreation Program is full, with parents reporting their high level of satisfaction with the program and recreation leaders. The Township should continue to measure community satisfaction on a regular basis.

**Safety from physical hazards and crime –** Hazardous conditions are a priority for repair with township staff responding to unsafe conditions immediately and no later than within 24 hours. The Township coordinates closely with the Police Department on public safety. The most pressing issue regarding parks and recreation safety is the establishment of a network of trails where residents can safely walk and ride their bicycles to community destinations. East Whiteland has made significant progress as many trail projects are being planned or constructed, but more is needed to create a safe trail network.

**Benefits for the Municipality beyond the Boundaries of the Parks –** Parks, recreation, trails, and open space help to enhance the quality of life in East Whiteland Township. Return on the Environment: The Economic Value of Open Space in Chester County concluded that investments in open space preservation support the Chester County economy by increasing property values, supporting economic activity, reducing environmental costs, and supporting a healthier populace. The benefits fall into four areas: home and property values, economic activity, environmental services, and Direct use benefits – health and recreation. Documenting such benefits in East Whiteland Township over time...
will help to make the case for continued investment and support for open space, parks, recreation, and trails.

**Challenges**

**Post-Covid 19 Impact** – Ramping up to serve the community through parks and recreation amidst the uncertainty of changing guidelines is a major challenge. This recent pandemic underscores the need for the Township to have an Emergency Plan for parks and recreation. Portland, OR’s Emergency Plan can serve as a model and can be accessed at https://www.portlandoregon.gov/parks/article/700882. The Pennsylvania Recreation & Park Society has created a Pandemic Resource Center which provides evolving information about parks and recreation as the Commonwealth opens back up after sheltering in place for an extended time. The information on the site is designed to help municipalities assess safety measures and future needs regarding public health and safety related to parks and recreation.

**Growth** - The major challenges driving East Whiteland Township and especially the Parks and Recreation Department include the fast pace of growth, urgency in preserving open space and connecting the community with safe places to walk and bicycle, along with increasing demands for public service and expectations of new residents.

**Community Involvement** – The existing Township boards, commissions and committees which are responsible for parks, recreation, open space and trails, and environmental conservation engage many passionate and knowledgeable residents, many with subject matter expertise as well. Facilitating the coordination and communication of these groups is a challenge.

**Park Planning** – Park planning is not a designated function in the Township. Consequently, park planning tends to be reactive to pressing needs or opportunities. It falls to the Parks & Recreation Board, the Property and Recreation Director and the Public Works Director as projects come up or an interested organization or individual has an idea for an improvement. Bacton Hill sat for decades before the park was master planned. The planning of Bacton Hill Park, with extensive community involvement and professional planning services, including the successful award of grant funding can be the model for park, recreation, and trail planning. There is no five to seven year Capital Improvement Program for parks, recreation, trails and open space. Park Planning needs to be recognized as an official function of the Parks and Recreation Department. A process for making changes in the parks that have a value of more than $10,000 and that will last more than five to seven years must be put into place. The process should include public involvement and the establishment of an impact statement that will include cost projections, how the project will be maintained and supported over its lifetime, and other factors to be identified.

**Maintenance Management** – East Whiteland Township needs a formal written maintenance management plan. The saying of “You can’t manage what you can’t count.” applies to parks and recreation facility maintenance. Workload cost tracking and the formulation of cost centers will help the Township to plan, direct, control and evaluate park maintenance, make budget and staffing decisions, and set fees and charges policies. It will also help to reduce the Township’s exposure to liability and litigation.

**Staffing** – The Township has been adding maintenance staff. Parks and Recreation planning, management and projects is the purview of the Property and Recreation Director. The demands on the Director’s
time are exceeding the capacity of available work hours. Alternative staffing for parks and recreation planning, programming, grants and management should be considered.

**Revenue Generation** – The Department is functioning while being largely supported through municipal funding. Programs are based upon the philosophy that user fees should cover their cost. There is nationwide pressure on public parks and recreation departments to increase revenues from the private sector. The pressure is increasing further based upon the uncertain financial situation of municipalities following the economic shutdown due to the Covid 19 virus.

**Opportunities**

**Implementing change in the Parks and Recreation System** – The establishment of new policies will help the Parks and Recreation Department to implement new procedures that will enhance the quality of the parks and recreation facilities. It is important to develop policies related to gifts; donations; naming rights; revenues; pricing; plan implementation; the evaluation of proposed projects in light of this adopted plan; enhanced methods for park planning based upon Bacton Hill; and emergency and safety management.

**Maintenance Management Planning** – Changes in maintenance staffing provide an ideal opportunity to develop a park maintenance management plan. PA DCNR offers a $10,000 grant that requires only a $1,000 match under the PEER grant program in which the Township could secure the services of a parks and recreation professional to collaborate with the maintenance staff to formulate this plan. In the meantime, use the Management Impact Statement in Figure 2.

**Increasing Recreation Staffing** – With a population of 12,402 expected to grow by another 2,000 residents, East Whiteland Township technically has the population to sustain a public parks and recreation department. The options for retaining the services of a parks and recreation professional, preferably a Certified Parks and Recreation Professional include the following:

- **Option A:** Continue to operate with staffing consisting of a Summer Program Administrator and 25% of the Property and Recreation Director’s time.
- **Option B:** Full-Time Parks and Recreation Director: Establishing a full-time position for Parks and Recreation Director. The Director would be responsible for park planning, grantsmanship, recreation programming, partnership development, community engagement, coordination with Public Works on Park Maintenance, and the management of parks and recreation functions.
- **Option C:** Contracting Out. Contract out recreation programming and park planning. Consider contracting recreation programming with an adjoining township that has a parks and recreation department. Retain the services of a Registered Landscape Architect with experience in park design on a consulting basis to assist the advisory boards and the Township in developing park improvement plans.
- **Option D:** Multi-Municipal Partnership. Consider evaluating the potential to establish a multi-municipal parks and recreation department. Grant funding is available to explore this idea via a $10,000 Peer grant matched by $1,000 shared by the participating jurisdictions.
Should the exploration result in a recommendation to establish a multi-municipal system, grant funds are available to help offset the cost of a parks and recreation position over four years allowing sufficient time to establish a sustainable parks and recreation system through a mix of public and private funding. Potential participants in this discussion could include East Whiteland Township, East Goshen Township, and Westtown Township which align with current programming needs, interests, and opportunities. Other potential interested jurisdictions could include all 11 municipalities in the eastern region of Chester County including East Goshen, West Whiteland, West Goshen, West Chester, Westtown, Thornberry, Willistown, Easttown, Tredyffrin, Malvern, and Charlestown. Other municipalities in the area are associated with other multi-municipal parks and recreation systems including Downingtown and Phoenixville. Starting small with the three jurisdictions of East Whiteland, East Goshen, and Westtown would make the project manageable with a likelihood of success. Other municipalities could be added over time and with respect to interest, goals and resources.

Use the Park Design Process to Focus on Park Support – Use major projects such as Bacton Hill Park to plan future maintenance costs, partnerships, and methods to generate revenue. Facilities such as high-quality pavilions will help the Township to generate outside revenues. Explore the design of parks to accommodate permitted alcohol use such as the beer garden in the summer concert series.
**Figure 2. Management Impact Statement**

**Purpose**

1. To assess the impact of a proposed project or program in terms of capital and operating costs, including capital cost, human resources required for operations, maintenance costs including labor, equipment, materials, supplies and cyclic repair, and the effect on other Parks and Recreation or East Whiteland Township operations, budgets, programs, and projects.

2. To use this information to make an informed decision about moving ahead with the proposed project or program.

**Method**

Determine:

1. Capital cost of proposed project or program.

2. Determine the operating costs for proposed project or program. Include:
   a. Number of staff hours required
   b. Cost of staff hours in salary, wages, benefits and payroll taxes.
   c. Cost of materials and supplies.
   d. Utility costs.
   e. Miscellaneous costs.

3. Impact on other facilities, programs, or responsibilities should the proposed project be undertaken.
   a. Will the project/program require funds needed for other facilities or services?
   b. Will the project/program require staff time needed for other facilities or services?
   c. How will the project impact the quality of services that the Conservancy or the Township has set as a goal?

4. Revenue Sources from existing township resources, additional township resources, and/or Other Means of Support
   a. Township funds – additional appropriation
   b. Township funds – within current budget
   c. Other municipal sources
   d. Grants
   e. Gifts or donations
   f. Non-tax funds to be generated for the project/program through fees, charges, sponsorships, partnerships, and/or other means.
   g. What partner(s) will make a commitment to support the project or program for a defined time period? Will they support the project over its life expectancy?

**Decision-Making**

Based upon the above information, does East Whiteland Township have the resources from any source (public, private, or combination of sources) to develop AND sustain this project or program?
RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Establish the Open Space Review Board.** Make the board responsible for coordinating open space and trail efforts including developing a process to identify potential open-space properties and trails and advance their conservation efforts. Coordinate the efforts with the Township Manager, Board of Supervisors, and related boards and committees.

2. **Establish the PROS Action Team.** Convene a “summit” of the four boards, committees, and commissions to develop the vision, mission and goals for the PROS Action team and guidelines for how the Team will operate and communicate. This will help to build support for the Team by committee, board, and commission members.

3. **Establish Guidelines.** Implement operating guidelines for all board, committee, commission, and councils. Consider adopting a policy on term limits for all advisory groups in East Whiteland Township.

4. **Put the Maintenance Impact Statement to use.** Follow up on its first use in the Bacton Hill Park grant application in subsequent projects such as the Down East Park revitalization.

5. **Establish a revenue and pricing policy with a goal to generate more non-tax revenues.**

6. **Evaluate the options for Recreation Staff via the Parks & Recreation Board with the assistance of Township management and the Supervisor liaison.**

7. **Establish a policy on gifts and donations.** The policy should be based on the implementation of this Parks, Recreation and Open Space Plan. This policy should include a range of options from simple park benches to major park improvements. For any major improvement incorporate a maintenance endowment in the donation to ensure that the Township can maintain or sustain the donation. Any park improvement should be tied to design guidelines to ensure that the element meets the high-quality standard that the Township is establishing for its parks, recreation facilities, trails, and open space.

8. **Re-calculate the fees-in-lieu of the mandatory dedication of parkland.** Strive to make these fees align with the market value of the development.

9. **Evaluate the potential for a bond issue or loan for major capital development, park improvements and trails.** Consider the potential to enact .25% Earned Income Tax for Open Space. This tax can be used to develop, improve, design, engineer and maintain open space acquired with dedicated open space taxes; prepare the resource, recreation, or land use plan needed to acquire open space under the law; and maintenance.

10. **Develop a Gift Catalog that lists a wide range of items that the public can purchase as gifts to the parks and recreation system.** Cost range should be from very low up to major facility development costs.

11. **Establish a formal written park maintenance plan.** Start with workload cost tracking for the cost of maintenance by park, task, and particular facility such as a soccer field.

12. **Develop an Emergency Services Plan.** Use the information generated from the Covid-19 crisis and sources such as the National Recreation and Park Association, the Pennsylvania Recreation and Park Society and the City Parks Alliance as resources.
CHAPTER 9 – IMPLEMENTATION STRATEGY

The East Whiteland Township Parks, Recreation, and Open Space Plan sets forth a vision that complements the Township’s existing parks, trails, and open spaces. It provides the framework for improving and expanding the public parks and recreation system; connecting the community with safe places to walk and bicycle; and creating more access to the Chester Valley Trail.

Parks and recreation in East Whiteland Township will be rooted in providing opportunities for citizens to engage in active healthy living, connecting with nature, participating in programs and attending public events in township parks. The public engagement process for this plan found that the majority of citizens in the Township think that parks, recreation, trails and open space are important to the community. They want to continue to preserve open space and recognize the importance of moving quickly, as few opportunities remain. They also support the ongoing development of trails and safer places to walk and bicycle. They want to see their existing parks maintained to a high standard, and new parks designed to meet their needs and wants.

This Implementation Strategy restates the recommendations featured throughout this plan and simply reorganizes them based on the plan’s goals and the Township’s priorities. The Implementation Strategy depends on a mix of public and private funding to develop the parks and recreation facilities over time, and generating support for operations and maintenance through partnerships, volunteerism and township funding.

Every incremental success, no matter how small, will advance East Whiteland Township’s vision for the future. The intent of this implementation strategy is to chart a course of action that is pragmatic and achievable and that also allows for larger scale initiatives should the opportunities emerge. Priorities, responsible parties and potential partners, a suggested timeframe, and resources, are outlined for each recommendation.

KEY OF ACRONYMS

OSRB – Open Space Review Board
BOS – Board of Supervisors
PRB – Park and Recreation Board
PC – Planning Commission
DVRPC – Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
DCNR – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
DCED – Department of Community and Economic Development

PennDOT – Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
SEPTA – Southeastern Pennsylvania Transportation Authority
GVSD – Great Valley School District
NRPA – National Recreation and Parks Association
PRPS – Pennsylvania Recreation and Parks Society
Goal 1. Conserve open space through fee simple acquisition or conservation easements, to protect natural resources, provide opportunities to connect with nature and offer respite in times of stress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Lead Party</th>
<th>Assistance</th>
<th>Potential partners/funding</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Create a framework of people, roles, and responsibilities for conducting the tasks necessary to conserve open space.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Create a formal advisory board (OSRB) to lead open space conservation.</td>
<td>BOS, PRB, Twp Staff</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
<td>Chester County</td>
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<td>B.</td>
<td>Formalize coordination and communication with existing boards and committees.</td>
<td>OSRB, Twp Staff</td>
<td>BOS, PRB, PC</td>
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<td>C.</td>
<td>Dedicate funding for open space through bonds, referenda or other means.</td>
<td>OSRB, BOS</td>
<td>Twp Staff</td>
<td>Chester County, DVRPC</td>
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<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>Conduct landowner outreach to gauge interest in preserving land as open space through sale, donation or other means.</td>
<td>OSRB</td>
<td>Twp Staff</td>
<td>Chester County, Natural Lands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>Pursue transactional assistance by engaging with a land trust or other uniquely qualified organization or professional.</td>
<td>OSRB</td>
<td>Twp Staff</td>
<td>Chester County, Natural Lands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>Guide the creation of Master Plans and Trail Plans for newly acquired parcels and easements to ensure public access.</td>
<td>OSRB</td>
<td>Twp Staff, Consultants, PRB</td>
<td>Chester County, DCNR, DCED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.</td>
<td>Create and formalize a set of criteria for the OSRB to use when considering conservation of a specific parcel. Recommended criteria are included in Chapter 4 and Appendix I.</td>
<td>OSRB</td>
<td>Twp Staff, PRB, BOS</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Conserve parcels which will protect or improve water quality in the Exceptional Value (EV) and High Quality (HQ) stream watersheds.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Lead Party</th>
<th>Assistance</th>
<th>Potential partners/funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Implement nature trails, fishing piers and restoration projects in conserved parcels</td>
<td>OSRB, PRB</td>
<td>BOS, Staff</td>
<td>Chester County, DCNR, DCED, Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Conserve land in the southern (especially southwestern) portion of the Township, where there is currently a lack of parks or open space.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>A.</strong> Pursue large parcels of land from a single owner, or cobble together multiple, smaller privately owned properties to create a meaningful park or open space for public use.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OSRB, PRB, BOS, Staff</td>
<td>Chester County, DCNR, DCED, Land Trust</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>B.</strong> Pursue properties near King and Morestein Roads, which could be connected to the Great Valley Little League site.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OSRB, PRB, BOS, Staff</td>
<td>Chester County, DCNR, DCED, Land Trust</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>C.</strong> Consider opportunities to acquire land from Immaculata or its affiliates for use as parks or open space.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OSRB, PRB, BOS, Staff</td>
<td>Chester County, DCNR, DCED, Land Trust</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Conserve parcels which are adjacent to existing parks and open spaces.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>A.</strong> Pursue easements or other agreements with Valley Creek Park’s corporate neighbors to improve access and expand the park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OSRB, PRB, BOS, Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>B.</strong> Pursue acquisition, easements or other agreements with landowners adjacent to Down East Park, which could expand the park from 2.5 acres up to approximately 16 acres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OSRB, PRB, BOS, Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>C.</strong> Expand Down East Park by pursuing conservation of the 3 acre wooded property and the 2.5 acre property containing the creek and a pond, to provide opportunities for nature trails, birding and stream protection.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OSRB, PRB, BOS, Staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expand Down East Park by pursuing agreements with PECO to use the adjacent right of way to expand the park or extend trails from the park to surrounding community uses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expand Down East Park by pursuing agreements with the neighboring corporate site to formalize the connection to the CVT and expand the nature trail system in their property.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expand Battle of the Clouds Park by pursuing preservation of the wooded area of Haim Solomon cemetery to include natural areas and nature trails.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Expand the Gunkel Spring Mill historic site by pursuing agreements with the corporate neighbor to use their vacant land for recreation purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Establish Whiteland Farm Park as a local trailhead by pursuing acquisition, easements or lease of surrounding properties, to create connections to nearby natural areas and community centers.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| 4 | Conserve the few remaining undeveloped large parcels for use as parks, open space with trails or natural areas. |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. | Continue working to acquire the Spring Ridge property and plan for its appropriate use. | OSRB, PRB | BOS, Staff | Chester County, DCNR, DCED, Land Trust |
| B. | Consider and pursue conservation of all or parts of the Knickerbocker site through acquisition, easement or open space development planning. | OSRB, PRB, PC | BOS, Staff | Chester County, DCNR, DCED, Land Trust |
| C. | Maintain and strengthen relationships with owners of large parcels, such as Immaculata, so the Township | OSRB, PRB | BOS, Staff | Chester County, Land Trust |
is well positioned to conserve land if the owner wishes to sell.

| D. | Consider conservation of unconventional sites, such as quarries and sensitive sites and their neighboring properties, for use as parks, trails and open spaces. These may include the Glasgow site, Bishop Tube, Whiteland Holdings, Green Fig Land and PECO owned parcels. | OSRB, PRB | BOS, Staff | Chester County, DCNR, DCED, Land Trust |

5. **Explore opportunities to acquire, conserve, lease or otherwise make use of lands owned by corporations or office complexes.**

| A. | Explore partnerships and agreements with corporate landowners which would permit parks, recreation and open space uses on their sites. | OSRB, PRB | BOS, Staff |

6. **Build relationships between the Open Space Review Board and owners of large properties and make it clear that the Township is interested in conservation.**

| A. | Communicate with the Great Valley School District to develop an ongoing understanding of their land holding needs, to position the Township to acquire or otherwise conserve any lands which they no longer need. | OSRB | BOS, Staff |

| B. | Communicate with Haym Solomon and the Philadelphia Memorial Park to develop an ongoing understanding of their land holding needs, to position the Township to acquire or otherwise conserve any lands which they no longer need. | OSRB | BOS, Staff |

| C. | Communicate with the Chester Valley Country Club to develop an ongoing understanding of their land holding needs, to position the Township to | OSRB | BOS, Staff |
acquire or otherwise conserve any lands which they no longer need.

**Goal 2. Establish the Parks and Recreation Facilities as accessible and adaptable community destinations, where residents of all ages and abilities can socialize, connect with nature and have fun!**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Strategy</th>
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<th>Assistance</th>
<th>Potential partners/funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><strong>Acquire more park land to fill the gaps and provide access to parks from neighborhoods which are currently isolated.</strong></td>
<td>Staff, PRB</td>
<td>Landscape architect, engineer</td>
<td>Chester County, DCNR, DCED, BOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Continue to properly plan for new parks and park redevelopments.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. <strong>Prepare master plans to guide major improvements and future development of the parks.</strong></td>
<td>Staff, PRB</td>
<td>Landscape architect, engineer</td>
<td>Chester County, DCNR, DCED, BOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. <strong>Provide signs in accordance with a township wide signage system.</strong></td>
<td>Staff, PRB</td>
<td>Signage design consultant</td>
<td>DCNR, BOS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><strong>Prioritize proper management of the trees within the parks.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. <strong>Establish a Shade Tree Commission to help the Township plan, maintain and manage the trees.</strong></td>
<td>Staff, PRB, BOS</td>
<td></td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. <strong>Conduct hazard tree assessments annually or after major weather events as needed.</strong></td>
<td>Staff, PRB</td>
<td>Public Works, Arborist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td><strong>Establish policies and procedures which will keep the parks safe and looking good.</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A. <strong>Assess the existing playgrounds for compliance with current safety requirements.</strong></td>
<td>Staff, PRB</td>
<td>Playground Safety Inspector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B. <strong>Implement products, programs and policies which will ensure the parks remain safe.</strong></td>
<td>Staff, PRB</td>
<td>Consultants</td>
<td>DCNR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C. <strong>Follow the recommendations of the International Dark Skies</strong></td>
<td>Staff, PRB</td>
<td>Engineer, Lighting Engineer</td>
<td>International Dark Skies Association</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Association when providing lighting at parks.

D. Establish and mark the park boundaries to avoid trespassing and encroachment issues.  
Staff, Public Works  
Surveyor, PRB

E. Establish a memorial and gift policy, to ensure continuity and maintenance of gifts such as benches and trees.  
Staff  
PRB  
BOS

5. Provide more benches and shade in the parks, especially at playgrounds.

A. Establish a Shade Tree Commission to help the Township plan, maintain and manage the trees.  
Staff, PRB,  
BOS  
Volunteers

6. Upgrade trails and parking to meet or come closer to meeting current standards of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

7. Protect Valley Creek and its tributaries with riparian buffer plantings, consisting primarily of trees and shrubs.

*Recommendations related to the individual parks can be found in the descriptions of each park in Chapter 6 of this plan.

Goal 3. Connect our community through a system of trails.

<table>
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<th>Potential partners/funding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Continue to implement the existing trails plans.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Implement all or portions of the thirteen existing trail or trail-related plans undertaken by the Township and County.</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Traffic Engineer, BOS, Chester County, PC</td>
<td>Chester County, DCNR, PennDOT, DCED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Plan for and implement trail connections between existing neighborhoods and key destinations.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Connect the Sidley Road and Mill Lane neighborhood to the Chester Valley Trail with bike and pedestrian amenities.</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Traffic Engineer, BOS, Chester County, PC</td>
<td>Chester County, DCNR, PennDOT, DCED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Connect the Atwater Development to Valley Creek Park with a multi-use trail.</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Traffic Engineer, BOS, Chester County, PC</td>
<td>Chester County, DCNR, PennDOT, DCED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Continue to explore potential rail line crossings through</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Traffic Engineer, AMTRAK, SEPTA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
tunnels, bridges, or other means.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D.</th>
<th>Provide bike and pedestrian amenities along King Road and through surrounding neighborhoods to provide safe access to Malvern Borough.</th>
<th>Staff, Traffic Engineer</th>
<th>PennDOT, Willistown, Malvern</th>
<th>Chester County, DCNR, DCED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>Continue to install the Patriots Path system of sidewalks, paths and trails to connect people to historic sites.</td>
<td>Staff, Traffic Engineer</td>
<td>Malvern, Willistown</td>
<td>Norfolk Southern, PennDOT, Chester County, DCNR, DCED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F.</td>
<td>Initiate a feasibility study for a trail to connect Westgate Village apartments to KD Markley School.</td>
<td>Staff, Traffic Engineer</td>
<td>GVSD</td>
<td>Westgate Village Apartments, DCNR, PennDOT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.</td>
<td>Evaluate and explore opportunities to provide safer crossings across or beneath Rt. 29 to improve access to Valley Creek park.</td>
<td>Staff, Traffic Engineer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.</td>
<td>Provide bike related amenities at all the parks.</td>
<td>Staff, PRB, Engineer, Landscape Arch.</td>
<td></td>
<td>DCNR, DVRPC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. Enhance access and use of the Chester Valley Trail.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.</th>
<th>Install a trail along the Lapp Road corridor to connect Valley Creek Park and the Great Valley Corporate Center with Ecology Park, the CVT and the proposed Sidley Rd/Mill Lane trail.</th>
<th>Staff, Traffic Engineer, BOS, Chester County, PC</th>
<th>Chester County, DCNR, PennDOT, DCED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Support and advance the Devault Rail Trail, to connect the Great Valley, CVT and Phoenixville.</td>
<td>Staff, Traffic Engineer</td>
<td>Chester County, DVRPC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Create additional trailheads to serve the Chester Valley Trail</td>
<td>Staff, Chester County</td>
<td>The Circuit, DVRPC</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 4. Promote safe pedestrian and bicycle connections along the main vehicular corridors.

<p>| A. | Install the proposed Valley Creek Corridor pedestrian path, which would parallel Route | Staff, Traffic Engineer, BOS, Chester County, PC | Chester County, DCNR, PennDOT, DCED |</p>
<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Install bike and pedestrian amenities along Route 30, per the recommendations in the Route 30 Corridor Master Plan.</td>
<td>Staff, Traffic Engineer, PC</td>
<td>BOS, Twp Engineer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Install a trail along Route 29 per the recommendation of the Route 29 Multimodal Study prepared by TMACC.</td>
<td>Chester County, Staff, Traffic Engineer</td>
<td>BOS, Twp Engineer</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5. Plan for access to parks and open spaces and those which may be developed in the future.

| A. | Establish trail easements on properties which the Township preserves to permit public access and build out the Township wide trail network. | Staff, OSRB | Land Trust, Twp Solicitor | DCNR, Chester County |

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### Goal 4. Improve and utilize Land Use Regulations to conserve open space, preserve important natural resources, and provide recreation opportunities within the community.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Assistance</th>
<th>Potential partners/funding</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Adopt amendments to the Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance which will better protect existing trees during the land development process.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Twp BOS</td>
<td>Chester County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Adopt the Ordinance Amendments attached to this plan in Appendices B &amp; C.</td>
<td>PC, Twp Staff, Twp Solicitor</td>
<td>Twp BOS</td>
<td>Chester County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Consider and adopt ordinance standards which permit well designed and properly scaled multi-family and commercial redevelopment where it is appropriate.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Twp BOS</td>
<td>Chester County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Use the Official Map to clearly delineate the intended or desired development patterns.</td>
<td>PC, Twp Staff</td>
<td>Twp BOS</td>
<td>Chester County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Adopt a standard of one required new tree when 20 or more parking spaces are proposed. Require linear tree lawns in which to plant.</td>
<td>PC, Twp Staff</td>
<td>Twp BOS</td>
<td>Chester County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Adopt standards which include</td>
<td>PC, Twp Staff</td>
<td>Twp BOS</td>
<td>Chester County</td>
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</table>
**maximum** building setbacks and parking to be placed to the side or rear of a building.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>D.</th>
<th>Adopt standards which require small green spaces or plazas to be included within commercial or mixed use developments.</th>
<th>PC, Twp Staff</th>
<th>Twp BOS</th>
<th>Chester County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>E.</td>
<td>Use the Official Map to delineate trails which will connect the community to commercial and mixed use development areas.</td>
<td>PC, Twp Staff</td>
<td>Twp BOS</td>
<td>Chester County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. **Prepare for the potential future development around a new SEPTA regional rail station.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.</th>
<th>Create a vision for development within a ¼ mile radius of the train station, based on information in Landscapes3, and Township planning documents, created within a public process.</th>
<th>PC, Twp Staff</th>
<th>Twp BOS</th>
<th>Chester County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Consider TOD ordinances to require high density, mixed use development within a 10 minute walk to the train station.</td>
<td>PC, Twp Staff</td>
<td>Twp BOS, SEPTA</td>
<td>Chester County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Consider adapting the Township’s existing GVR standards to create TOD standards</td>
<td>PC, Twp Staff</td>
<td>Twp BOS, SEPTA</td>
<td>Chester County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4. **Replace the existing cluster zoning with conservation subdivisions and greater percentages of required open space.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A.</th>
<th>Amend the SLDO to require a site visit to include the applicant, consultants and (some) members of the PC.</th>
<th>PC, Twp Staff</th>
<th>Twp BOS</th>
<th>Chester County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Amend the SLDO to require the Four-Step Design process which demonstrates that an applicant has delineated open space first.</td>
<td>PC, Twp Staff</td>
<td>Twp BOS</td>
<td>Chester County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Amend the SLDO to include design standards for conservation land, to ensure</td>
<td>PC, Twp Staff</td>
<td>Twp BOS</td>
<td>Chester County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
that open space is usable and protects important natural resources.

D. Amend the ZO to require 50% to 70% of the gross site area to be conserved as open space. PC, Twp Staff Twp BOS Chester County

E. Amend the ZO to include density disincentives, to allow full density only when the required open space is provided. PC, Twp Staff Twp BOS Chester County

F. Amend the SLDO to reduce the required width of new streets to reduce impervious surfaces, calm traffic and create more beautiful neighborhoods. PC, Twp Staff Twp BOS Chester County

G. Consider applying the standards for Public Land Dedication and Fee in Lieu to non-residential properties. Additionally, review and update these standards periodically. PC, Twp Staff Twp BOS Chester County

H. Amend the SLDO to deduct steep slopes from the developable acreage calculations. PC, Twp Staff Twp BOS Chester County

Goal 5. Develop, expand and continue to offer Programs and Services which strengthen the community and allow residents to connect with nature and each other, and engage in active, healthy lifestyles.

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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Continue to provide summer recreation programs, concerts and special events.</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Promote the parks, recreation facilities, trails, programs and services through the website, newsletters and social media.</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>PRB</td>
<td>Volunteers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Institute better management practices for Summer Camp, including leadership training,</td>
<td>PRB</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Summer Camp staff</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. **Develop a plan to expand programming which would consider year-round program staffing, partnerships with surrounding communities, contracting out some events and revenue generating services.**

   A. **Empower the Director of Property and Recreation to discuss and develop strategies for operating a parks and recreation system in light of the existing pandemic.**

   B. **Hold an annual summit of all related recreation providers to discuss what’s working well, what could be better and how they could partner.**

3. **Develop a formal maintenance management system for park and open space maintenance.**

   A. **Utilize the Maintenance Impact Statement when preparing for future improvements.**

   B. **Establish policies on gifts and donations which consider long term maintenance and endowments.**

   C. **Create a formal, written park maintenance plan which includes workload cost tracking.**

   D. **Develop an Emergency Services Plan based on information from NRPA and PRPS to help prepare for future emergencies and crises.**

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**Goal 6.** **Build on the strengths of the Township’s Parks and Recreation Board, administration, elected officials, volunteers and citizens, to establish an Organizational Configuration that best serves the Township’s Parks and Recreation needs.**

<table>
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<tr>
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</thead>
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</tbody>
</table>
1. Create a Shade Tree Commission (STC) as a new body or as a subcommittee to the Parks and Recreation Board or the proposed Open Space Review Board.

2. Create an Open Space Review Board or similar body, independent of the existing boards, to lead the Township activities related to open space preservation.

3. Upon establishment of an Open Space Review Board, create or update an organizational chart.
   A. Establish the PROS Action Team, with guidelines on how the team should function, and roles for each member.
      Staff, PRB, BOS  PC, EAC, OSRB
   B. Establish guidelines for all boards, committees, commissions, and councils. Consider adopting term limits.
      Staff, BOS,  PC, EAC, OSRB, PRB

4. Establish quarterly multi-committee meetings of the OSRB, PC, PRB, STC and BOS, to include members of each body, to discuss ongoing projects and opportunities for collaboration.

5. Determine the Township’s perspective on establishing a Parks and Recreation Department.
   A. Attend regional meetings of parks and recreation departments in Chester County or PRPS District III to stay informed about current trends and opportunities.
      PRB  Staff

6. Consider a multi-municipal parks and recreation department.
   A. Explore multi-municipal programming with neighboring townships.
      Staff  PRB
   B. Evaluate options with input from staff, PRB and BOS.
      Staff  PRB, BOS

7. Explore a grant to plan for the optimal organization framework.
Goal 7. Continue to seek additional funds through county, state and federal grants, and further diversify sources of Financial Support in order to continue improving parks and recreation while easing the burden on the Township budget.

<table>
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<tr>
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<th>Potential partners/funding</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Work towards a mix of public and private support with cost recovery goals.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.</td>
<td>Establish a revenue and pricing policy with a goal of generating more non-tax revenues.</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>PRB</td>
<td>Vendors, contractors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.</td>
<td>Recalculate the fees-in-lieu of mandatory dedication of parkland on a regular basis to ensure the fees align with market value.</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Parks and Recreation Planner</td>
<td>PRB, BOS, PC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.</td>
<td>Evaluate bonds or loans for major capital developments, park improvements and trail implementation.</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>Consultant</td>
<td>BOS, PRB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.</td>
<td>Develop a gift catalog to easily allow the public to make gifts to their parks and recreation programs.</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>PRB</td>
<td>Solicitor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Phase in this expanded financial support over time, with goals based on average municipal and per capita investment.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX

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Appendix A – Strategies for Impacted Parcels

Through a prioritization effort done as part of this study, five (5) sensitive sites have been identified as potentially desirable for recreational development. These sites are:

- Spring Ridge Parcel
- Knickerbocker Parcels
- Bishop Tube Parcel
- Glasgow Quarry
- Green Fig/Whiteland Holding/PECO.

For each of the five sites mentioned above, this Appendix will present an overview of:

- what is known about the current environmental condition at each of these sites;
- what data gaps should be investigated by the Township prior to pursuing ownership of that parcel;
- how those conditions may impede redevelopment of the parcel for recreational end-use;
- how impediments could be addressed;
- resources that may be available to mitigate any impediments to recreational development; and,
- potential strategies and resources for acquisition.

Before discussing strategies for each site, it is valuable to discuss the liability tools that are available to protect the Township should it decide to pursue ownership of a site that may have environmental liability associated with it. In short, with the multitude of liability protection tools, the Township should not be immediately or unduly “afraid” to consider ownership of a brownfield site.

Statutory Liability Protections under PA Act 3

In 1995, Pennsylvania passed a three- (3) piece suite of Brownfield Revitalization legislation. What is commonly known as PA Act 2, established the voluntary cleanup program which includes cleanup standards, timelines for review and liability protections when the cleanup standard has been achieved.

One of the companion pieces of PA Act 2 was PA Act 3, The Economic Development Agency, Fiduciary and Lender Environmental Liability Protection Act. The intent of this legislation was to provide “up front” liability protection to public sector entities who sought to take ownership of brownfield properties for redevelopment efforts. This “up front” liability protection is in place even before any Due Diligence or cleanup activities have taken place. Act 3 was amended in May 2000 by Act 6, the Industrial Sites Environmental Assessment Act. Act 6 provided grants for conducting assessments of industrial sites and expanded the definition of municipality eligibility. The grants are available through the Industrial Site Reuse Program and can be used to conduct Due Diligence site assessments for parcels being considered for acquisition by the Township.

Due Diligence, All Appropriate Inquiry and Innocent Purchaser Protection

The foundation of environmental liability begins with the perspective purchaser conducting All Appropriate Inquiry through Environmental Due Diligence. Environmental due diligence is a formal process that assesses real estate for potential risk of environmental contamination, such as soil or
groundwater contamination. Standards for conducting environmental due diligence are set forth by the
Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

EPA’s Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA) establishes a
process to determine who is liable for environmental contamination. Proper assessments made through
environmental due diligence can provide protection from environmental liabilities under CERCLA, even if
contamination is found after the purchase is made.

Liability protection under the CERCLA is for owners, innocent landowners, and bona fide prospective
purchasers. To demonstrate qualification for one of these parties, All Appropriate Inquiries (AAI) must
be conducted prior to acquiring the property. This means conducting environmental due diligence
through a Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA), which is where most due diligence
investigations begin. Acquisition of any of these sensitive parcels should begin with a Phase 1
Environmental Site Assessment.

Conducting Due Diligence not only offers liability protections, but it is often a requirement of public
funding sources such as EPA’s Brownfield Assessment and Remediation grants. Pennsylvania’s
Industrial Site Reuse Program offers grants to municipalities to pay for initial assessment work. County
Economic Development Corporations may also secure EPA Brownfield funding that can be sub-granted
to municipalities to conduct initial Due Diligence activities.

Environmental Cleanup Levels, Ongoing Regulatory Obligations & Reuse Considerations

Some of the identified priority parcels present more complicated pathways to recreational
redevelopment because they may have to be remediated before they can be redeveloped for
recreational end-uses. When prioritizing the parcels for consideration of acquisition, the Township will
need to consider how “ready” the site is to host recreational end-uses. The Pennsylvania Department
of Environmental Protection (PADEP) requires parcels to be utilized for recreational end-uses must meet
the same cleanup criteria as sites that are being proposed for residential end-uses. The Township
should determine if a parcel is environmentally ready to host recreational activities. If it is not,
investigations should be conducted to determine whether the parcel can be remediated in a cost-
effective manner to support recreational activities.

In addition, some of the parcels may have ongoing and long-term monitoring obligations that can be
quite costly. The regulatory and financial obligations should be identified, quantified, assigned and
conveyed to the regulatory agency prior to any acquisition.

Summaries and recommendations for the five priority sites are provided in the sections below.

1. **Spring Ridge Parcel** - This 98.7 ac wooded tract (42-3-17) lies at the northernmost boundary of
the Township, where it borders Charlestown Township.

   **Current ownership situation**: Balderston Family Estate currently owns the property. East
Whiteland Township has applied to the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural
Resources (DCNR) for funds to acquire the site.

   **Current environmental conditions**: According to the EPA Region 3 website for the Malvern TCE
Superfund site, the Spring Ridge tract was separated out from, and not included in, the Malvern
TCE Superfund site when the CHEMCLENE CORP property was listed as a National Priority List
site in 1983. EPA reports addressing the Malvern TCE site list it as a five acre property; site maps correspond to Parcel Number 42-3-17.4 only. There is no indication that the subject parcel had a history of industrial use or any reason to generally suspect environmental impacts. In addition, EPA investigations indicate the contaminated groundwater is migrating away from the subject parcel and likely not impacting the subject parcel.

EPA Region 3 Website: https://cumulis.epa.gov/supercpad/SiteProfiles/index.cfm?fuseaction=second.ars&id=0300868&doc=Y&colid=38&region=03&type=AR

The Township secured the services of Boucher & James, Inc. (B&J) to complete a Phase 1 environmental site assessment of the subject parcel in order to support possible acquisition of the parcel. The B&J site assessment concluded that there are no environmental impacts on the parcel except for two Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs) that warrant further investigation. B&J recommends further targeted investigation of specific areas of the property: (1) to determine if illegal dumping occurred on this property in relationship to the operations at the Malvern TCE site and (2) to determine if a rail line on the property could pose any impediment to recreational uses at the property. At the time of this report, the Phase 2 investigation had not been started pending access agreements with the property owner.

Data Gaps or Impediments to Reuse:

At the time of this report, it is unknown if the identified RECs pose an impediment to recreational end-use. The pending B&J Phase 2 investigation should provide some conclusions relative to the appropriateness of using this parcel for recreational end-uses and any potential environmental liability that would have to be addressed by the Township.

Mitigation Recommendations: Due Diligence should be completed regarding the environmental conditions at the site. Site design efforts must consider and incorporate components of any remediation and/or site contamination, i.e. capping, deed restrictions, groundwater use limitations, etc.

Potential Resources: If additional resources are needed for Due Diligence, the Township could: apply for an Industrial Site Reuse Program Assessment Grant either directly or through Chester County; ask for resources from the property owner to be put in to escrow to complete the Due Diligence; inquire to PADEP as to resources available through the Hazardous Sites Cleanup Act program (in relationship to the Malvern TCE Superfund site).

2. Knickerbocker Parcels - This approximately 175 acre site (42-4-42, 42-4-25.1, 42-4-25.2, 42-4-30) contains a 40-acre former landfill. The site features open meadows, woodlands and an important stretch of Valley Creek in close proximity to residential neighborhoods and corporate centers. The site could accommodate trails which could connect residents and businesses to the park, and to the existing Valley Creek and Ecology Parks.

Current ownership situation: DP Whiteland, LLC is the equitable owner of several parcels of land located between Mill Lane, Lapp Road, Old Morehall Road / Liberty Boulevard in East Whiteland Township (42-4-19 ; 42.4-25.1 ; 42-4-25.2 ; 42-4-42 ; 42-4-30) – known collectively as
the “Knickerbocker Tract.” The developer submitted site concept plans for discussion at the Planning Commission meeting on June 26, 2019.

The owner currently seems to have no interest in or intentions to subdivide the property for conveyance to a public sector entity for use as a community park or trail system. The developer has included some elements of open space primarily for stormwater management.

**Current environmental conditions:** The property is listed on the EPA Region 3 website as KNICKERBOCKER LANDFILL (EPA ID: PAD000605972), an Archived site. It was listed because it was a former landfill. It is not on the National Priority List as an active Superfund site and no action is considered necessary or recommended by EPA for this property.

The regulatory status of the landfill closure is unavailable. However, the owner has indicated that there are ongoing groundwater monitoring obligations at the site.

**Data Gaps or Impediments to Reuse:** The frequency, cost, and overseeing regulatory agency for the ongoing groundwater monitoring obligations are not known at this time.

**Mitigation Recommendations:** Given the uncertainty of the regulatory status of the site and the ongoing groundwater monitoring obligations, the recommended strategy is to work with zoning tools to mandate inclusion of public access and amenities without pursuing ownership.

**Potential Resources:** There are many examples of successful projects that utilized former landfill spaces for recreational redevelopment once appropriate zoning changes have incorporated site design and public protection features. One of the most successful examples, the satirically named Mount Trashmore, Virginia went from a brownfield to becoming Virginia’s most popular park, with a children’s playground and a world-famous skate park. Situated upon mounds of compacted trash and topped with a layer of clean soil, its lush areas span upwards of 165 acres, with massive hills that stretch 60 feet high and cover over 800 feet of ground. Amending the Zoning Ordinance to permit some of the light industrial districts to be rezoned for higher density compact housing with open space could better satisfy the need for additional housing and open space. Chapter 3 discusses land use in more detail.

**3. Bishop Tube Parcels** - At 13.6 acres (42-4-321.2), the site could accommodate a neighborhood scale park. The site currently contains a mix of forest, open areas and remnant industrial buildings. Little Valley Creek also flows through the site. The site is isolated and would likely cater to the residents of General Warren Village, almost exclusively. There are potential opportunities to expand conservation around the site to provide improved access and greater open space and recreational opportunities. The 6.3-acre Swope Lees property, located directly south of Bishop Tube, is mostly forested and also contains Little Valley Creek. Adding this property would increase the park to nearly 20 acres. Establishing a park at this site would also provide access to the residents of General Warren Village to Malin Road, allowing them to walk safely to Lancaster Avenue.
**Current ownership situation:** Constitution Drive Partners L.P. (CDP) has owned the site since 2005. They purchased the site with the intent to redevelop it for a residential end use. CDP submitted revised redevelopment plans to East Whiteland Township in April 2019. The Township agreed to carry the Preliminary Plan application through August 2019. For details associated with the plans, please refer to East Whiteland Township's website.

**East Whiteland Township Bishop Tube website:**
https://www.eastwhiteland.org/351/Bishop-Tube-Land-Development

**Current environmental conditions:** CDP did not cause or contribute to any contamination of the site, however as the site owner, they could have legally been considered a “responsible party” subject to regulatory enforcement action for site remediation. Since CDP conducted appropriate “due diligence” in the form of environmental site assessment and because they did not cause or contribute to the contamination, CDP was allowed to sign a Prospective Purchaser Agreement (PPA) with PADEP that afforded CDP liability protection from regulatory enforcement actions by PADEP. The PPA obligated CDP to perform some level of remedial effort for soil contamination. The PPA obligated PADEP to continue with the remedial efforts focused on groundwater contamination. In 2010, a second amendment to the PPA indicated the CDP had satisfied its obligations to date and transferred obligations related to soil remediation back to PADEP for a cash settlement.

Currently, in accordance with a PADEP agreement with Johnson Matthey, Inc. and Whitaker Corporation (JM/W), Roux Associates (Roux) has been working on behalf of JM/W to complete the Remedial Investigation (RI) of the Site.

To complete the RI, Roux is performing the following activities:

- Evaluating discharges to the Little Valley Creek.
- Completing the delineation of site-related groundwater contamination:
  - On March 1, 2019 – Roux submitted a work plan (WP), on behalf of JM/W, to model the extent of the plume. On April 9, 2019 DEP approved the modeling WP. In the letter, PADEP agreed to a revised schedule for the RI and FS to be submitted on or before June 10, 2019. After review and approval of the RI/FS reports, DEP will propose a remedial response action to address the contamination associated with the Site.

East Whiteland Township has been awarded a Technical Evaluation Grant (TEG) pursuant to the Hazardous Site Cleanup Act. The TEG provides up to $50,000 for conducting an independent technical evaluation of a proposed remedial response at a HSCA site.

There will be a 90-Day comment period on the proposed remedial solution. PADEP will hold a public meeting to discuss the proposed remedial solution for the site during the 90-day comment period.
Data Gaps or Impediments to Reuse: In 2019, the PPA and its 2010 amendments were challenged and referred to the Environmental Hearing Board, an advisory board to the PADEP. The impact of this challenge is unknown at this time. PADEP is evaluating what the challenge means to the site cleanup efforts.

This challenge may impact the Township’s evaluation of the proposed cleanup solution once PADEP makes it available for review and comment. The Township’s TEG consultant will have to evaluate the impact of the challenge to the Township’s evaluation.

Mitigation Recommendations: In the event the site would become available for acquisition by the Township for development into recreational space, the following “next steps” are suggested:

i. Meet with PADEP to gain a thorough understanding of the timeline for remediation and the cleanup standard being pursued (recreational use requires that the cleanup meet the “residential standard”). The Township has been given the TEG funding to hire a consultant to evaluate the proposed remedial solution. This consultant should be evaluating the proposed remedial solution in the context of a potential recreational end-use.

ii. Investigate the use of or need for a PADEP Buyer-Seller Agreement (BSA) which is a tri-party consent order and agreement between the Buyer, Seller and PADEP. The BSA assigns the remediation obligations including timeline, costs and standard to be achieved at the site. The BSA provides “up front” liability protection for the Buyer of the property while facilitating the real estate transaction by allowing the Buyer to take ownership before the remediation of the site is complete. Given the current remedial activities and assignment of cleanup obligations, it is unlikely that the Township would need to take on any cleanup obligations; however, redevelopment of the site may be delayed until some remedial activities are complete.

iii. Utilize a firm that specializes in recreational site design on brownfield sites and determine if redevelopment of the site could be “phased” based on existing environmental conditions and the timeline for remediating each portion of the site. Such a firm could also determine if any site design features could be incorporated as remedial solutions to minimize long term operation and maintenance costs.

Potential Resources: If the opportunity for acquisition presents itself, the Township can pursue public funding for site acquisition, site development, and creation of park and/or recreational amenities. Two possible sources are DCNR’s Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) program and the Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED)’s Greenways, Trails and Recreation program.

East Whiteland Township has experience in applying for grants from DCNR and has been successful in acquiring funding for open space and park and recreation projects. [https://www.grants.dcnr.state.pa.us](https://www.grants.dcnr.state.pa.us)

Grants from DCED depend heavily on political support. In order to successfully acquire this funding, East Whiteland must work with the local state representatives to gain their support and assistance. [https://dced.pa.gov/programs/greenways-trails-and-recreation-program-gtrp](https://dced.pa.gov/programs/greenways-trails-and-recreation-program-gtrp)
In the absence of acquisition options, the Township should initiate zoning-related tools to mandate open space amenities and trail connection requirements. The land use discussion in Chapter 3 of this report outlines how the Township’s current cluster provisions could be updated with conservation subdivision design standards that would require all constrained land and at least half of the “net” or buildable land to be set aside as open space as residential development occurs.

4. Glasgow Parcels - The 245-acre quarry site (42-2-6.1, 42-2-6, 42-2-3.1) spread across three parcels, could potentially become a park in the future. Approximately 75 acres of the site are currently being quarried to extreme depths. The remaining acreage could potentially be rehabilitated and converted to parkland, to be used for a mix of active and passive uses, including some natural areas. Quarried lands can be developed, as evidenced by the Atwater development across Route 29, which is now home to offices, commercial pad sites and a high-density residential development. In the late 90’s and early 2000’s, Falls Township, Bucks County, created a community park from a former quarry site. That 230-acre park contains a lake in the former quarry, which is used for fishing and boating. The rest of the site holds a roller hockey rink, dog park, basketball courts, pavilions, baseball and softball fields, a skatepark, boat ramp, sledding hill, multipurpose fields and over three miles of loop trails. The park is the centerpiece of the Township park and recreation system and hosts events and programs of all sizes.

Since 1997, Glasgow, Inc. has operated two clean fill reclamation facilities in southeastern Pennsylvania: Montgomery Stone Reclamation and Ivy Rock Reclamation. Initially both sites were operated as Glasgow quarries, but now offer a more economical means to dispose of clean fill than traditional landfills, ultimately contributing to a safer, healthier community. Glasgow’s approach at these former quarries suggests a proactive interest in reusing their former quarry site for business operations, but also reinvestment in their communities.

Current environmental conditions: The current conditions of the property are not available in terms of evaluating the suitability of the conditions to support recreational end-uses.

Quarries such as the Glasgow operations are considered “Noncoal mining” activities in Pennsylvania. These types of activities were first regulated under Act No. 147 of 1971. Prior to that, quarries were unregulated for mineral removal. The current noncoal mining law is called the Noncoal Surface Mining Conservation and Reclamation Act (Noncoal SMCRA, Act No. 219), which was enacted in 1984. This replaced the old Act No. 147. Before Act 147 took effect (a time known as Pre-Act, taken to be prior to January 1, 1972), quarries were often abandoned and left un-reclaimed when mineral extraction concluded. Highwalls that have not been affected since then are designated Pre-Act, and, even in active quarries today, may not be required to be reclaimed.

Today, operating quarries, such as the Glasgow facility, are required to be permitted by PADEP’s Bureau of Mining. The PADEP Permit includes mining and support areas, facilities and roads. In the case of a permitted quarry, there is an approved reclamation plan. Once the mining is done, the permittee must restore the area to meet the reclamation plan. These sites are
bonded to assure that the reclamation plan is completed. Bond release is in two stages, the first when the area is regraded and stabilized and the second when the vegetation is permanently established - this includes a five-year waiting period. The reclamation plan could reflect the recreational post-mining land use.

**Data Gaps or Impediments to Reuse:** The interest of the current property owner to support future recreational development is unknown. Similar to the adjacent Atwater site, this property may have to go through at the Act 2 Program in order to be utilized for recreational end-uses or other redevelopments. However, if the reclamation plan included efforts to support recreational reuse, the Act 2 Program may be unnecessary.

**Mitigation Recommendations:** If site acquisition is the Township’s goal, appropriate Due Diligence should be conducted in order to afford the Township the greatest liability protection.

Given Glasglow’s proactive approach to reuse of their former quarries, the Township could initiate conversation with the company now to determine if there is any opportunity to integrate public recreational amenities into future site closure and reclamation plans.

**Potential Resources:** If the opportunity for acquisition presents itself, the Township can pursue public funding for site acquisition, site development, and creation of park and/or recreational amenities. Two possible sources are DCNR’s C2P2 program and DCED’s Greenways, Trails and Recreation program:

https://www.grants.dcnr.state.pa.us

https://dced.pa.gov/programs/greenways-trails-and-recreation-program-gtrp

If resources are needed for Due Diligence, the Township could apply for an Industrial Site Reuse Program Assessment Grant either directly or through Chester County.

5. **Green Fig/Whiteland Holding/PECO Parcels** - These three entities own a group of parcels on the western edge of the Township which contain a total of approximately 112 acres (42-3-130.1, 42-3-130.2, 42-6-1, 42-3-130 & 42-3-131). If the land is suitable, this would be an interesting location for a park or open space. The Chester Valley Trail provides the northern boundary of the sites and connects them to Bacton Hill Park, across Swedesford Road, and to Battle of the Clouds Park, down the trail to the east. Additionally, West Whiteland Township owns approximately 32 acres adjacent to the west.

**Current environmental conditions:** The current environmental conditions of these parcels are not available in terms of evaluating the suitability of the conditions to support recreational end-uses. However, several of the parcels do have history of environmental impacts.

In 2019, Green Fig/Whiteland Holdings submitted a Preliminary / Final Subdivision application to divide their existing 71.5 acre tract into three (3) separate lots for the future development of a data center complex and solar field. The property is located at 15 South Bacton Hill Road and
consists of parcels 42-3-130, 42-3-130.1, and 42-3-130.2. This property is the former Foote Mineral Superfund Site. The EPA oversaw cleanup at the site and implemented an Environmental Covenant (EC) that includes a prohibition on residential end-use, groundwater use restrictions and cap maintenance requirements at the site. The EC was amended to allow construction of a passive solar field on the former quarry area (42-3-130) of the property.

In addition, there appears to be a transfer station on a portion of the PECO parcels (42-3-131 and 42-6-1). The environmental conditions of these two parcels are unknown at this time.

**Data Gaps or Impediments to Reuse:** At the time of this report, it is unknown if the existing conditions of each parcel would support recreational end-uses.

**Mitigation Recommendations:** Thorough Due Diligence should be conducted for each parcel in order to inform decisions regarding acquisition.

**Potential Resources:** If additional resources are needed for Due Diligence, the Township could apply for an Industrial Site Reuse Program Assessment Grant either directly or through Chester County or ask for resources from the property owner to be put in to escrow to complete the Due Diligence.

If the opportunity for acquisition presents itself, the Township can pursue public funding for site acquisition, site development, and creation of park and/or recreational amenities. Two possible sources are DCNR’s C2P2 program and DCED’s Greenways, Trails and Recreation program:

[website1](https://www.grants.dcnr.state.pa.us)
[website2](https://dced.pa.gov/programs/greenways-trails-and-recreation-program-gtrp)
Appendix B – Recommended SLDO Revision – Article II

The following Code does not display images or complicated formatting. Codes should be viewed online. This tool is only meant for editing.

The following definitions shall be inserted in alphabetical order:

§ 175-6 Definitions.
As used in this chapter, except where the context clearly indicates otherwise, the following words and phrases have the meanings indicated below:

Caliper - The diameter of a tree trunk at a point six inches from the ground surface at the center of the base of the tree. 

DBH, Diameter at Breast Height – The measure of the diameter in inches of a tree trunk at a point four and one half (4.5) feet above ground.

Tree Dripline - The marking where the outer edge of a tree’s branches overhang the ground.

Tree Protection Zone (TPZ) – The TPZ extends from the tree trunk a distance equal to twelve (12) times the trunk diameter at breast height, or to the tree’s drip line, whichever distance is greater.

Woodland - A plant community of one-quarter (1/4) acre or more in area in which tree species are dominant or co-dominant, the branches of the trees form a complete, or nearly complete, aerial canopy and where the largest trees measure a least six (6) inches in diameter DBH. A woodland also includes ten (10) or more individual trees of six (6) inches or greater DBH under a common canopy. Woodlands consist of groupings of live trees regardless of species or presence of illness, infestation, or physical defect. Woodlands includes any area where timber has been harvested within the previous three years and/or woodland disturbance has occurred within the previous three years that would have met the definition of woodland prior to timbering or disturbance. Woodlands do not include orchards, nurseries, or tree farms.
Appendix C – Recommended SLDO Revision – Article VI

The following Code does not display images or complicated formatting. Codes should be viewed online. This tool is only meant for editing.

Zoning Section 200-68. Recommended buffer plantings. This section shall be deleted in its entirety and amended to read as follows:

200-68. Recommended buffer plantings.

Planted materials listed in Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance Section 175-41. D. 3. are authorized for inclusion in buffers; other plantings may be authorized, subject to recommendation of the Planning Commission and the Township Engineer.

Subdivision and Land Development Ordinance. Amendments shown in track changes.

§ 175-41 Buffers; community assets; trees.

A. (No changes included.)

B. Community assets. The development plan shall incorporate design features which preserve and protect natural features, such as woodlands and individual large trees, as controlled by Subsection C of this section, watercourses, historic features and structures, and similar community assets, even if the retention of such features results in a reduction of the number of lots or buildings otherwise permitted by the applicable zoning district regulations of Chapter 200, Zoning, of the Code of the Township of East Whiteland.

C. Existing trees. Developments shall be designed to preserve the maximum number of existing trees consistent with the reasonable development of the tract and in strict compliance with this section.

(1) Subdivisions and land developments shall be designed to preserve existing trees, whether a single tree or part of a woodland. Neither portions of tree masses nor specimen trees shall be cleared unless the burden lies with the applicant to demonstrate that tree removal is absolutely necessary, and then only with the Board’s approval. In determining the necessity for tree removal, the Township may require that the applicant provide an evaluation by a professional forester or another qualified professional acceptable to the Township. In order to minimize damage and property loss due to flooding, and to preserve stream health, no event shall any trees shall be cleared from any flood hazard area. Developer shall make all reasonable efforts to harmonize their plans in order to preserve these existing trees. Exceptions to tree removal limitations include the following conditions:

(a) Immediate danger to life or property;

(b) Affliction by a disease which threatens to injure or destroy other trees; and,

(c) Where compliance with federal, Commonwealth or Township laws, regulations and rules which supersede these provisions requires removal.

(2) When effectuation of a proposed subdivision and/or land development necessitates tree removal, the clearing of trees or portions of tree masses, developer shall be guided by the following criteria in selecting trees and ornamentals for retention or clearing:
(a) Ecological functions, such as protecting steep slopes, erodible soils, maintaining stream quality and providing for wildlife habitat.

(b) Aesthetic values (autumn coloration, type of flowers and fruit, bark and crown characteristics, amount of die back present).

(c) Relationship to vegetation, especially woodlands on adjoining and nearby properties and the potential for maintaining continuous woodland and other naturally vegetated areas.

(d) Susceptibility of tree to insect and disease attack and to air pollution.

(e) Species longevity.

(f) Wind firmness and characteristic of soil to hold trees.

(g) Wildlife values (e.g., oak, hickory, pine, walnut, and dogwood have high food value).

(h) Comfort to surroundings (e.g., hardwoods reduce summer temperatures to surrounding area more effectively than pines or cedars).

(i) Existence of disease, rot, or other damage to the tree.

(j) Protection of buildings (e.g., dead and large limbs hanging over buildings shall be removed).

(k) The size of the tree at maturity.

(3) Protection of existing vegetation during construction. In order to prevent encroachment or injury to woodlands, hedgerows, individual trees, shrubs and other vegetation to remain on site, a Tree Protection Zone, as defined, shall be established as follows: Developer shall exercise care to protect trees which remain from damage during construction. The following procedures shall be adhered to in order to preserve the remaining trees and shall be noted on the plan. All remedial work shall be performed by qualified personnel.

(a) Prior to construction, protective, fencing shall be placed at the Tree Protection Zone. The fencing shall be temporary in nature, such as a snow fence, shall be at least four feet high and staked with posts every five feet on center. The fencing shall be maintained until all construction work has been completed. Where appropriate and required for managing stormwater, super silt fence may be substituted for fencing, however, in no case shall standard silt fence be acceptable as tree protection fencing. Where existing ground levels are raised, drainage tile will be placed at the old soil level and open into a well built around the base of the tree. Such wells may be left open or can be filled with coarse stones or gravel. Tiles may be installed in a radiating pattern or laid in parallel lines. Where existing ground levels are to be lowered, a retaining wall must built around the tree.

(b) Grade changes and excavations shall not encroach upon the Tree Protection Zone. Those trees which have been delineated on the plan and are within 25 feet of a proposed building excavation or other locations deemed appropriate by the Township Engineer shall be protected by installing and maintaining a fence to the drip line.

(c) Trees being removed from the site shall not be felled, pushed or pulled into a Tree Protection Zone. No boards or other material shall be nailed to trees during construction.

(d) No toxic chemicals or materials that damage trees shall be permitted within one hundred (100) feet...
of a Tree Protection Zone, including wash down of cement handling equipment and storage of petroleum based and derived products. Heavy equipment operators shall avoid damaging existing tree trunks and roots. Feeder roots shall not be cut closer than 25 feet from tree trunks.

(e) If topsoil is to be stockpiled, it shall be located outside any Tree Protection Zone. Tree trunks and exposed roots damaged during construction shall be protected from further damage by being treated immediately.

(f) Any damage to the fencing or encroachment on the Tree Protection Zone shall be remedied immediately. The Township may require the removal and replacement of vegetation damaged during construction. Tree limbs damaged during construction shall be properly pruned and treated immediately.

(g) The operation of heavy equipment over root systems of such trees shall be minimized in order to prevent soil compaction. The use of geotextiles, mulch or straw is required to protect roots from compaction when machinery cannot avoid passing under trees, subject to the Conservancy Board's review and approval.

(h) Damaged trees shall be fertilized to aid in their recovery.

(i) Construction debris shall not be disposed of near or around the bases of such trees.

(j) Trenching and root pruning shall not take place within the fenced area at the tree drip line.

(k) Root pruning should not be done on more than one "side" of the root system in a given year. Delay additional pruning for at least two years following initial pruning. Optimum timing is autumn.

(4) Tree removal limitations and compensatory planting. Unless otherwise provided in this chapter, no more than:

(a) 20% of any woodland the trees on any wooded lot may be cut or removed, including disturbance for construction;

(b) outside of woodlands, no more than 25% of trees over 6 inches DBH may be removed from tracts subject to residential development; and,

(c) outside of woodlands, no more than 40% of trees over 6 inches DBH may be removed from tracts subject to non-residential and mixed-use development.

(5) The remaining trees 80% shall be retained, unless a waiver is granted by the Board, subject to the following criteria:

(a) The applicant demonstrates that reasonable development of the tract cannot occur without woodland and tree removal that exceeds the above limitations;

(b) The applicant demonstrates that tree removal conserves the highest quality woodlands and healthiest trees on the tract;

(6) Trees removed over six inches DBH, including individual trees, or trees growing in woodlands. The trees removed from a wooded lot cleared or developed shall be replaced on a tree-for-tree basis, meeting the standards in subsection D., below. Replanting shall be done in accordance with a plan prepared by a licensed professional landscape architect, registered in the Commonwealth of
Pennsylvania and approved by the Township.

(b) All replacement trees shall be three-inch caliper minimum and the Township will select the type of tree to be used for replacement.

(c) Plantings required pursuant to the buffer yard and landscaping requirements of this chapter may not be considered in calculating the replanting requirements of this section.

D. New and replacement trees.

(1) Required tree planting. This requirement shall be in addition to any minimum tree planting requirement imposed by any provision of this chapter or Chapter 200, Zoning, of the Code of the Township of East Whiteland related to required street trees, screening and/or parking lot areas. All lots within a development that are vacant of trees shall have a minimum of one large deciduous tree and one evergreen or understory-coniferous tree planted for each 5,000 square feet of lot area or part thereof. Where an applicant preserves existing deciduous trees over 6 inches DBH, and existing evergreen and understory trees over 2 inches DBH on the new lot, such trees may count towards the tree planting required by this section. This requirement shall be in addition to any minimum tree planting requirement imposed by any provision of this chapter or Chapter 200, Zoning, of the Code of the Township of East Whiteland related to required street trees, screening and/or parking lot areas.

(2) Tree standards. Large deciduous trees required by this subsection, and canopy trees required for buffers in Zoning Section 200-68 shall have a minimum caliper of 2 to 2-1/2 inches measured one foot above ground level after planting and evergreen and understory trees shall be 6 to 8 feet height. All such trees shall be listed by type and species and shall be shown on the Conservation Plan. All plant materials shall meet the standards of the American Standards for Nursery Stock by the American Nursery and Landscape Association, most recent edition.

(3) Species. Following is a list of species that are recommended for planting:

(a) Large Deciduous Trees, as required in this section and Canopy Trees, as required for buffers in Zoning Section 200-68:
- red maple (Acer rubrum)
- sugar maple (Acer saccharum)
- red buckeye (Aesculus pavia)
- pignut hickory (Carya glabra)
- shagbark hickory (Carya ovata)
- mockernut hickory (Carya tomentosa)
- northern catalpa (Catalpa speciose)
- hackberry ( Celtis occidentalis)
- American beech (Fagus grandifolia)
- thornless honey locust (Gleditsia triacanthos var. inermos)
- kentucky coffee tree (Gymnocladus dioica)
- black walnut (Juglans nigra)
- sweetgum ( Liquidambar styraciflua)
- tulip poplar (Liriodendron tulipifera)
- cucumber magnolia (Magnolia acuminata)
- sweetbay magnolia (Magnolia virginiana)
- black gum (Nyssa sylvatica)
- sycamore (Platanus occidentalis)
- white oak (Quercus alba)
- swamp white oak (Quercus bicolor)
scarlet oak (*Quercus coccinea*)
bur oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*)
chinquapin oak (*Quercus muhlenbergii*)
pin oak (*Quercus palustris*)
willow oak (*Quercus phellos*)
chestnut oak (*Quercus prinus*)
red oak (*Quercus rubra*)
black oak (*Quercus velutina*)
American linden (*Tilia americana*)
American elm (*Ulmus americana*)

(b) Evergreen Trees required in this section or in Zoning Section 200-68:
atlantic white cedar (*Chamaecyparis thyoides*)
anamerican holly (*Ilex opaca*)
eastern red cedar (*Juniperus virginiana*)
black spruce (*Picea mariana*)
short leaf pine (*Pinus echinate*)
red pine (*Pinus resinosa*)
pitch pine (*Pinus rigida*)
white pine (*Pinus strobus*)
virginia pine (*Pinus virginiana*)
hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*)

(c) Understory Trees required in this section and Flowering/Ornamental trees required in Zoning Section 200-68:
moosewood maple (*Acer pennsylvanicum*)
shadblow (*Amelanchier canadensis*)
allegheny serviceberry (*Amelanchier laevis*)
pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*)
yellow birch (*Betula allegheniensis*)
sweet birch (*Betula lenta*)
river birch (*Betula nigra*)
gray birch (*Betula populifolia*)
american hornbeam (*Carpinus caroliniana*)
eastern redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)
fringetree (*Chionanthus virginicus*)
yellowwood (*Cladrastis kentukea*)
pagoda dogwood (*Cornus alternifolia*)
flowering dogwood (*Cornus Florida*)
cockspur hawthorn (*Crataegus crus-galli*)
downy hawthorn (*Crataegus mollis*)
washington hawthorn (*Crataegus phaenopyrum*)
persimmon (*Diospyros virginiana*)
Carolina silverbell (*Halesia carolina*)
umbrella magnolia (*Magnolia tripetala*)
crabapple (*Malus coronaria*)
red mulberry (*Morus rubra*)
hop-hornbeam (*Ostrya virginiana*)
sourwood (*Oxydendrum arboreum*)
black cherry (*Prunus serotina*)
chokecherry (*Prunus virginiana*)
wafer ash (*Ptelea trifoliata*)
blackjack oak (*Quercus marilandica*)
staghorn sumac (*Rhus typhina*)
black willow (*Salix nigra*)
sassafras (*Sassafras albidum*)
mountain ash (*Sorbus Americana*)
toothache tree (*Zanthoxylum americanum*)

(d) Hedges (four foot high minimum for small trees and 18 inch minimum for shrubs) as required in Zoning Section 120-68:

- serviceberry (*Amelanchier canadensis*)
- American cranberrybush (*viburnum trilobum*)
- arrowwood (*viburnum dentatum*)
- nannyberry (*viburnum lentago*)
- maple-leaved viburnum (*viburnum acerifolium*)
- winterberry (*ilex verticillate*)
- American holly (*ilex opaca*)
- flowering dogwood (*cornus florida*)
- silky dogwood (*cornus racemosa*)
- northern bayberry (*myrica pensylvanica*)
- red chokeberry (*arnoia arbutifolia*)
- black chokeberry (*aronia melanocarpa*)
- sweetbay magnolia (*magnolia virginiana*)
- mountain laurel (*kalmia latifolia*)
- rosebay rhododendron (*rhododendron maximum*)
- Virginia sweetspire (*itea virginica*)

Deciduous canopy trees:

- *Acer rubrum*, saccharum (Maple: Red, Sugar)
- *Catalpa speciosa* (Catalpa)
- *Fraxinus pennsylvanica* (Green Ash)
- *Lax liricina* (Tamarack)
- *Liquidambar styracifera* (Sweet gum)
- *Liriodendron tulipifera* (Tulip tree)
- *Magnolia acuminata* (Cucumber tree)
- *Nyssa sylvatica* (Sourgum or Tupelo)
- *Populus deltoides* (Poplar)
Quercus coccinea, imbricaria, phellos, rubra (Oak: Scarlet, Laurel, Willow, Red)

(b) Understory trees:

Amelanchier species (Serviceberry or Shadbush)

Asimina triloba (Paw Paw)

Betula lenta (Cherry or Sweet Birch)

Betula nigra (River Birch)

Betula papyrifera (Paper Birch)

Ceitis occidentalis (Hackberry)

Cercis canadensis (Redbud)

Chionanthus virginicus (Fringe tree)

Comus florida, altemifolis (Dogwood: Flowering, Pagoda)

Crategus species (Hawthorns)

Diospyros virginiana (Common Persimmon)

Halesia carolina (Carolina Silverbell)

Magnolia virginiana (Sweetbay and other Magnolias)

Malus species (Crabapple)

Oxydendron arboreum (Sourwood)

Sassafras albidum (Sassafras)

Stewartia ovata f. grandiflora (Mountain Stewartia)

Styrax obassia (Fragrant Snowbell)

Viburnum prunifolium (Black Haw)

Abies concolor (White or Concolor Fir)

Tsuga canadensis (Canadian Hemlock)
### Definition of Class A Waters:
Streams that support a population of naturally produced trout of sufficient size and abundance to support a long-term and rewarding sport fishery.

### Management:
Natural reproduction, wild populations with no stocking.

### Definition of Ownership:
Percent Public Ownership: the percent of stream section that is within publicly owned land is listed in this column, publicly owned land consists of state game lands, state forest, state parks, etc.

### Important Note to Anglers:
Many waters in Pennsylvania are on private property, the listing or mapping of waters by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission DOES NOT guarantee public access. Always obtain permission to fish on private property.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>County</th>
<th>Water</th>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Fishery</th>
<th>Section Limits</th>
<th>Lower Limit Latitude</th>
<th>Lower Limit Longitude</th>
<th>Length (miles)</th>
<th>Percent Public Ownership</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adams</td>
<td>Carbaugh Run</td>
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<td>Brook</td>
<td>Headwaters to Carbaugh Reservoir pool</td>
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<td>Water</td>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Fishery</td>
<td>Section Limits</td>
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<td>Percent Public Ownership</td>
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<td>UNT to Nittany Creek (RM 5.12)</td>
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<td>UNT to Pine Creek (RM 7.91)</td>
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<td>Centre</td>
<td>UNT to Pine Creek (sands hollow)</td>
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<td>Brown</td>
<td>Headwaters to Mouth</td>
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<td>Centre</td>
<td>UNT to Pine Creek (sands hollow)</td>
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<td>Centre</td>
<td>Unt to Slab Cabin Run - thompson run</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Brown</td>
<td>Headwaters at duck pond to Mouth</td>
<td>40.813890</td>
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<td>Unt to Smays Run (RM 1.39)</td>
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<td>Centre</td>
<td>Unt to Spring Creek (RM 2.83; Left)</td>
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<td>UNT to Wallace Run (RM 0.87)</td>
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<td>Moshannon Creek</td>
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<td>Bull Run</td>
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<td>Cedar Run</td>
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<td>Penns Creek</td>
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<td>North Branch Buffalo Creek</td>
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<td>Fishery</td>
<td>Section Limits</td>
<td>Lower Limit Latitude</td>
<td>Lower Limit Longitude</td>
<td>Length (miles)</td>
<td>Percent Public Ownership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Unt to Valley Creek (cedar hollow)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Brown</td>
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<td>40.067420</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>First Jack Dent road bridge to Mouth</td>
<td>41.220310</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Brook</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>UNT To Anderson Creek (Roaring Run)</td>
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<td>UNT To Bell Run (RM 4.62)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Brook</td>
<td>Headwaters to Mouth</td>
<td>40.970556</td>
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<td>UNT to Curry Run (RM 4.78)</td>
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<td>UNT to Dale Run (RM 0.36)</td>
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<td>Brook</td>
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<td>41.013817</td>
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<td>Brook</td>
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<td>40.963415</td>
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<td>Clearfield</td>
<td>UNT to Kratzer Run (RM 3.59)</td>
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<td>Mixed</td>
<td>Brook/Brown</td>
<td>40.968799</td>
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<td>Clearfield</td>
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<td>Brook</td>
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<td>41.202174</td>
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<td>Clearfield</td>
<td>UNT to Muddy Run (RM 2.67)</td>
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<td>Brook</td>
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<td>40.792906</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clearfield</td>
<td>UNT To Potts Run (RM 5.47)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Brook</td>
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<td>40.873981</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>Headwaters to Mouth</td>
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<td>Clearfield-Elk</td>
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<td>41.205436</td>
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Referendum to Authorize a Tax or Bond for Conservation

Pennsylvanians may vote to establish a tax specifically dedicated to open space protection in their municipality. Voters may also approve borrowing by their county or municipality for conservation projects.

Introduction

A conservation referendum is a highly successful mechanism for raising money dedicated specifically to conservation. Local governments\(^1\) in Pennsylvania can protect open space with agricultural, recreational, natural, scenic, historic, or cultural value using funds approved by voters in a primary or general election.

Voter approval via a referendum is only legally required if the proposed conservation financing would put a local government over its statutory debt or tax limits. However, a referendum may still be desirable even if a local government is below its debt and tax limits, because the referendum serves to dedicate the tax or bond revenue to the specific conservation purpose described in the referendum. Also, a referendum may be useful if the government will seek to incur additional debt or raise taxes in the future for purposes that are subject to the statutory debt and tax limits.

Referenda are effective—and popular—mechanisms to fund conservation projects in communities. Between 1987 and 2017, states, counties, and municipalities across the United States passed 1,980 of 2,624 proposed conservation ballot measures (75%), generating nearly $76 billion for open space, parks, watersheds, recreation areas, and wildlife preserves.\(^2\)

Between 1987 and 2017, Pennsylvania voters approved 129 of 164 proposed conservation ballot measures (79%), allocating nearly $1.6 billion for conservation purposes.\(^3\) 126 of the 129 referenda were at the county and municipal level; three were statewide.\(^4\)

This guide focuses on how to pass a referendum in a Pennsylvania county or municipality.

Tax and Borrowing Options

Dedicated Taxes

Pennsylvania’s Act 153 of 1996 allows—with a simple majority vote—all cities, boroughs, and townships to levy dedicated earned income, property, and realty transfer taxes for the purchase of open space lands or

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1 For the purposes of this guide, “local government” refers to a county or municipality.
2 Data from The Trust for Public Land’s LandVote database: [www.landvote.org](http://www.landvote.org)
3 Ibid.
Referendum to Authorize a Tax or Bond for Conservation

Easements. Counties may not levy dedicated taxes under the act.

There are no limits on voter-authorized property and earned income tax rates. However, state law limits the local real estate transfer tax to 1.0%. The money from dedicated taxes must be spent on open space protection under the rules laid out in the act.

**Act 115** of 2013 provides that, in addition to acquiring land and easements, dedicated open space taxes may be used to develop, design, improve, and maintain open space that has been protected under Act 153 referenda. It also clarifies that a referendum is required to repeal voter-approved open space taxes.

**Non-Voted and Voter-Approved Debt**

All counties and municipalities in Pennsylvania may issue non-voted debt, provided they are within the statutory debt limits permitted under the **Local Government Unit Debt Act**. A county may issue up to 300% of its average annual revenue over the previous three years, while municipalities are capped at 250%.

If a bond issue would exceed the debt limit or hamper the local government’s financial flexibility by using too much of its non-voted debt issuing capacity, the Local Government Unit Debt Act gives local governments authority to conduct a referendum to incur electoral debt. There are no limits on the amount of debt, and local governments may spend the money for any elector-approved purpose.

**Rules Governing Referenda**

**Pennsylvania Election Code Requirements**

The method for placing a referendum question on a ballot is set forth in the [Pennsylvania Election Code](P.L. 1333, No. 320).

**Pass an Ordinance**

First, the governing body must pass an ordinance to have the question placed on the ballot. See “Featured Library Items” in the online guide for examples, including ones from Allen Township and Barrett Township.

**Question for Approval**

For tax measures, the municipality must then file the question with the county board of elections at least 13 Tuesdays before the next primary or general election. To conform with Act 153, the question for approval of a dedicated tax must be phrased with the following words:

*Do you favor the imposition of a [describe the tax in millage or rate] by [local government unit] to be used to [purpose]?*

For a debt referendum, the question must be submitted to the county board of elections at least 45 days in advance of the election. According to the Local Government Unit Debt Act, the question must be phrased substantially as follows:

*Shall debt in the sum of [amount] dollars for the purpose of financing [describe purpose] be authorized to be incurred as debt approved by the electors?*

**Election Notices**

For both tax and debt referendum questions, it is also necessary to publish election notices in local newspapers and legal journals beginning no earlier than three weeks before the election but no later than two weeks before the election. The purpose of the ballot measure should be described carefully so that a) the intent is clear to the voters and b) the measure authorizes all of the intended spending. An example might be:

*...for the acquisition of land and conservation easements for open space, recreation, and the preservation of farmland.*

If a government plans to spend the tax or bond money on specific property or easement acquisitions (rather than dedicating it for unspecified future conservation purchases), these must be described.

**Bond Expiration**

The Local Government Unit Debt Act stipulates that the authority to issue a voter-approved bond expires 10 years after the referendum passes. If a government unit fails to issue the entire bond in that time period, it can either issue the remaining bond as non-electoral debt (which counts towards debt limits) or seek to pass another referendum.
Enabling Legislation
While voter approval of a referendum question is a significant accomplishment, it alone does not implement the tax or incur the debt. The governing body must pass an ordinance to enact the proposed financing. See “Featured Library Items” in the online guide for examples, including ones from Lower Saucon Township and Upper Milford Township.

Rules Governing Campaigns

Campaign Finance Reporting Law

Political Committees
In addition to adhering to IRS lobbying regulations, participants in a referendum campaign must comply with Pennsylvania’s Campaign Finance Reporting Law (25 P. S. §§ 3241-3260b). Under this law, any organization that receives or spends more than $250 to influence the outcome of a referendum must register as a political committee with the county board of elections and submit reports documenting expenditures and contributions. Each committee must have both a treasurer and chairperson.

If multiple organizations are lobbying voters to pass a measure, each organization does not need to register separately as a political committee; instead, the organizations can form and register one political committee. Each organization can then report its monetary and in-kind staff contributions on the committee finance reports.

Conversations with staff from the Pennsylvania Ethics Commission and Department of State reveal that, in practice, there is little to no enforcement of this obscure area of Pennsylvania election law. The Department of State will investigate complaints it receives, but does not monitor elections to catch organizations that fail to comply.

Education-Only
Rather than lobby for a “yes vote,” land trusts can function in a purely educational capacity with regard to ballot measures. By providing information to voters but not asking them to vote a certain way, a land trust does not need to register as a political committee.

Ethics
Pennsylvania law includes the following rules:

- Local governments cannot support or oppose a ballot measure.
- Elected officials may take a public stance and promote a ballot measure in their official capacity, as long as this does not involve non-elected staff or other government resources.
- Non-elected government employees acting in their capacity as government employees cannot support or oppose a ballot measure. However, they may advocate during their own personal time without the use of government resources.

Consult the Pennsylvania Ethics Commission (and, possibly, legal counsel) with any questions before becoming involved in a campaign.

How to Pass a Referendum

Preliminary Considerations
Opposition, especially from prominent elected officials, community leaders, or highly motivated groups can be a major obstacle to passing a referendum. In situations where there is strong, organized opposition to conservation funding, the cost of running a campaign may not be worth the risk of losing. Before launching a campaign, it is crucial that conservation advocates gauge the support of local elected officials and other influential people in order

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5 Advocating for “yes” votes on a referendum is considered as lobbying under federal tax law.
6 In the case of a statewide referendum, committees must register with the Pennsylvania Department of State.
7 Phone conversations between Nate Lotze and staff on 10/18/2017.
8 Developers sometimes oppose conservation referenda; they also sometimes support them.
to decide whether a referendum campaign makes strategic sense.

If financial resources allow, it is a good idea to conduct polling to gauge the community’s support for conservation funding. (Some campaigns use Republican pollsters, since their results are less likely to be dismissed as propaganda by conservatives sitting on local governing boards that must vote to allow a referendum to proceed.) Polling data can show what people want to protect and how much funding they will tolerate. As is the case with opposition from local leaders, strong public opposition to increased conservation funding may make it unwise to launch a referendum campaign in a community.

**Organization**

One key to a successful campaign is organization. The referendum process, as with any political campaign, requires time and effort.

**Timing**

After deciding to launch a campaign, advocates should first choose the election in which the referendum will be included on the ballot. Primary elections usually draw only the most committed voters (8-10% of the electorate), who tend to be less inclined to support new taxes or borrowing. General elections generate a larger and more ideologically balanced turnout (15-20% of the electorate).

However, with a crowded general election ballot, the referendum measure might be placed near the bottom, increasing the likelihood of voters skipping it. Also, the blizzard of candidates and issues can make it difficult to clearly communicate the campaign’s message to the public. In some cases, especially when other tax or bond initiatives are on the ballot, it may be prudent to postpone a conservation referendum so it is not lost in the shuffle.

Advocates should begin laying the groundwork for a campaign (gathering information, meeting with local leaders, forming coalitions, creating campaign materials, etc.) six months to a year before the vote. Outright public campaigning should wait until around three months before Election Day; going public too early risks giving the opposition time to organize.

**Message**

Advocates should stick to their central message, focusing on how the funding will benefit the community and the costs of not approving the referendum. Cost-savings arguments usually resonate most with voters, especially those who may not be conservationists or outdoor enthusiasts themselves.

If a neighboring community has a similar referendum scheduled, campaigns should work together to avoid confusion and conflicting messages.

**Ballot Language**

In addition to meeting basic legal requirements, well-crafted ballot language can be crucial for success. Language, ideally informed by polling data, should identify the most compelling purposes for the funding, such as protecting drinking water sources or preserving a community’s rural character. Language should be easy to read, with minimum legalese, and should present the costs in a clear and understandable way. A title that captures the central goal of the ballot measure is also helpful.

**Components of a Campaign**

While every campaign is unique, most successful campaigns do the following:

- Decide whether to hire professional help to organize and run the campaign.
- Anticipate costs and develop a preliminary budget.
- Organize a campaign committee with at least a committee chair and treasurer (see “Political Committees” above); recruit a team of volunteers. A well-organized, committed group of people is essential to pass most referenda.
- Assign responsibilities and monitor a schedule of tasks.
- Find a well-respected local champion to serve as primary spokesperson. Request support from other key community members.
• Solicit financial contributions. (Campaign materials generated by the registered political committee should indicate that donations to the committee are not deductible for income tax purposes.)

• Hire a polling firm to conduct a public opinion survey before (see “Preliminary Considerations”) or during a campaign. Use insights from the poll responses to shape campaign messaging and literature.

• Initiate a dialogue with landowners, farmers, or other potentially affected audiences to explain the proposed referendum and its benefits.

• Encourage participation from other supportive groups.

Guidance
Many advocates use a municipality’s adopted open space, natural resource, recreation, or farmland preservation plan to guide the scope of the referendum. Another option is to prepare a new plan, or update an existing plan. The plan should address these basic issues:

• What are the community’s conservation and open space goals?

• How will land be selected for protection?

• Who will administer the program?

• Will the funds purchase land, easements, or both?

• What are realistic acreage goals?

• How much will the program cost to implement? Will it incur future improvement and maintenance costs?

• Which financing methods (bonds, earned income taxes, property taxes, realty transfer taxes, or combinations) are available and appropriate? How much revenue will each generate?

• Who will the tax affect the most?

• How much will it cost the average household in the community?

Public Outreach
Public support for the referendum is critical. Voters deserve to know how much money they will pay and how the municipality will spend it. A campaign should describe the proposal clearly and explain how individuals and interest groups will benefit.

Generally, this involves engaging a wide variety of local organizations and elected officials, who can spread the campaign message to their members and constituents. Campaigns should also ask local political parties to endorse the referendum and acknowledge the referendum in their election handout material.

Effective ways to win the support of voters include:

• Hold public meetings.

• Organize private meetings with key groups. Examples include: environmental and watershed groups, environmental advisory councils, planning commissions, park and recreation boards, athletic leagues, farming groups, and senior citizen groups.

• Distribute yard signs and campaign posters throughout the community, especially along busy roads.

• Post information on the local government’s website and establish a separate website and/or social media pages on platforms like Facebook and Twitter.

• Cultivate members of the press to write articles supporting the referendum.

• Publicize open space success stories to highlight the ways the referendum will benefit the community.

• Create a video, PowerPoint presentation, and series of infographics to share online and at in-person events and meetings.

• Send out multiple mailings, newsletters, and postcards in the two to three weeks before the election. Obtain a voter list from the county and only mail to people who have voted at least once in the previous three elections; avoid wasting money and time on people who do not vote.
• Conduct phone banks on the last weekend before the election to educate citizens about the referendum and remind them to vote. (Again, only focus on residents with a history of voting.)
• On Election Day, have volunteers hold signs, distribute flyers, or staff information tables at polling places to describe the referendum to voters and answer questions.

Campaign Materials
Published information about the referendum should define (or avoid) conservation jargon, such as conservation easement or in perpetuity. Materials might also include:

• A summary explaining the ballot measure and why it is necessary
• A breakdown of funds targeted in the proposed measure
• A description of the natural areas the measure will protect
• A list of influential supporters or endorsements
• Anticipated annual costs to the average household
• Other relevant background information specific to the community and answers to frequently asked questions

After the Vote
In the absence of powerful opposition, the strategies and practices outlined above should, in most cases, lead to passage of the referendum. However, whether the measure is successful or not, advocates should acknowledge the efforts of everyone involved in the campaign, particularly any elected officials who championed the cause.

As noted in “Enabling Legislation” above, the governing body of the municipality or county must enact an ordinance to implement the financing authorized in the referendum. Once the ordinance is enacted, advocates can shift their focus to ensuring that it achieves the desired conservation objectives.

They can hold meetings to distribute information about the initiative, meet with people interested in selling or preserving their land (if applicable), and share success stories through the communication channels established during the campaign.

Case Study: Adams County
The story behind a 2008 initiative in Adams County, Pennsylvania offers insight into the process of passing a conservation referendum.

An Opportunity
In the early 2000s, a county ballot measure was considered but never pursued. When the 2,500-acre Glatfelter Tree Farm came up for sale, local officials and conservationists knew they needed to work quickly to secure the acquisition funds. The local township supervisors and the Adams County Board of Commissioners initiated a dialogue between the farm owners and parties interested in preserving the land.

Considering the daunting price tag of $12.5 million, purchasing the tree farm required fundraising at many levels. Although nearly half of the needed funds had been pledged by the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) and the Richard King Mellon Foundation, it was clear that Adams County would have to step up to the plate with a funding commitment of its own.

The county commissioners agreed to pursue a bond referendum to provide $3.7 million to acquire the tree farm. This commitment created the necessary leverage for The Conservation Fund (TCF) to negotiate a sales agreement and close on the property with bridge funding. Once the sales agreement was negotiated, work began immediately to pass the referendum.

Organizing a Team
A team\(^9\) of national and local organizations began working on the bond referendum. TNC enlisted the expertise and resources of its national conservation referendum team, which has worked with TPL since Conservancy, and the Adams County Farmland Preservation Board.

\(^9\) National: The Nature Conservancy (TNC), The Trust for Public Land (TPL), and TCF. Local: Land Conservancy of Adams County (LCAC), the Appalachian Trail.
1986 to pass ballot measures across the country (with a 90% success rate). The team prefers to begin the campaign work at least one year in advance, which in this case, gave them time to put the measure on the ballot for the 2008 presidential election.

**Research**
TPL conducted feasibility research to analyze the situation on the ground. The feasibility study thoroughly evaluated funding options in the county and analyzed revenue projections. It also covered ballot language, best management practices from previous measures, and the county’s election history.

This study concluded that Adams County could incur additional debt in the form of a municipal bond, and provided data for the next phase of the process: public polling to determine if the taxpayers were willing to assume additional county debt.\(^\text{10}\)

Funding a poll can be costly. In this case, TPL and TNC leveraged foundation funding while LCAC provided a small match. One of the most valuable aspects of the polling was to test ballot language and understand which aspects of the measure were most important to voters. These insights shaped the team’s public outreach campaign.

The poll also indicated that the public recognized the value of clean water, farmland preservation, and wilderness access and would support more than just the amount needed to purchase the tree farm. Armed with that knowledge, the team increased the proposed bond amount to $10 million.

**Fundraising**
Because it would spend or receive more than $250 to influence the election, TPL established a political committee to run the campaign, per Pennsylvania law. (TPL had a 501(c)4 structure designed to house local ballot measures, which housed the committee.) The committee raised over $52,000 from partner organizations and individual donors. With this budget, the team was able to complete five mailings and produce palm cards that were distributed at the polls. The team also secured volunteers to be present at most of the voting locations on Election Day to pass out materials and speak with voters.

**Success**
The referendum passed with 75% approval. While conservation referenda are rather common in eastern Pennsylvania, no county west of the Susquehanna River had ever passed one.

Through additional local public and private fundraising, and the award of a $3.5 million U.S Forest Service Forest grant, the project was completed in early 2010 and the tree farm was incorporated into the adjacent Michaux State Forest.

The success of the Adams County conservation referendum was the result of collaboration, creative funding, a well-researched ballot measure, effective messaging and communication strategies, and ample local support.

**Case Study: Smithfield Township**
In 2016, voters in Smithfield Township, Monroe County (PA) approved a $2 million bond (known as the Smithfield Township Water Quality, Forest, and Wildlife Habitat Fund) to finance land and water protection. The referendum passed by a large margin, with 76% support.

Several key elements of the campaign contributed to the passage of the referendum.

**Local Leaders**
All three township supervisors were committed to protecting the area’s natural resources and publicly supported the ballot measure. A well-known landowner and naturalist in the area also campaigned for the referendum. Their support added legitimacy to the campaign.

**Clear Goals**
The campaign established clear goals for the conservation funding. The $2 million bond would be

\(^\text{10}\) Feasibility studies are a valuable tool for pollsters, providing background information on the region and guidance on what type of questions to ask.
used to acquire land and conservation easements in strategic areas in order to:

- Protect drinking water supplies;
- Protect water quality in lakes, rivers, and streams;
- Protect forests and wildlife habitat; and
- Protect wetlands that provide flood protection.

A Strong Coalition
Multiple groups were involved with the campaign. The Nature Conservancy created a Facebook page to promote the ballot measure. The Trust for Public Land conducted research and polling, and worked on the ground with Pocono Heritage Land Trust (PHLT) to educate voters. Because PHLT only engaged in education (rather than lobbying), it was not required to register as a political committee.

An Effective Message
Polling consistently shows that clean water is a top environmental priority for voters. The campaign capitalized on this by emphasizing in its communications that the money would be used to protect drinking water supplies for township residents.

Social Media
The Facebook page (called “Vote Yes on Smithfield Water Quality”) served as the campaign’s online headquarters. The campaign used the page to share educational materials and links to articles about the referendum, as well as videos and photos of events. The page generated grassroots interest in the ballot measure.

Voter Education
In written and verbal communications, the campaign clearly articulated that the measure would only cost the average homeowner an extra $2.50 per month. It reassured voters that all acquisitions would be in cooperation with willing landowners, and that there would be an annual public audit of how the funds were spent. The campaign also made sure to define terms like conservation easement so voters did not feel overwhelmed by jargon.

The campaign distributed a two-page document to explain the ballot measure and answer common questions.

Ballot Placement and Language
The ballot was placed on the November 2016 ballot. Because of the presidential election, this timing offered the promise of high voter turnout. The township supervisors had the measure placed at the top of the ballot; the campaign highlighted this in its public outreach.

The measure used straightforward language that clearly explained the financial cost and numerous conservation benefits of the proposal:

Shall debt in the sum of Two Million Dollars ($2,000,000.00) for the purpose of financing the acquisition of land, development rights and/or conservation easements in the township for the protection of drinking water supplies; water quality in lakes and streams; wetlands that provide flood protection; forests and wildlife habitat be authorized to be incurred as debt approved by the electors?

Resources at ConservationTools.org
To find experts and other resources, including additional case studies of successful ballot measures, see the right column of the on-line edition at http://conservationtools.org/guides/16.

***

11 Because this was the only lobbying action taken, and it cost less than $250 (in staff time), TNC did not have to register as a political committee. However, it did file an Independent Expenditure Report, which is required for expenses between $100 and $250.
Submit Comments
Help improve the next edition of this guide. Email your suggestions to the Pennsylvania Land Trust Association at aloza@conserveland.org. Thank you.

Acknowledgements
Nate Lotze substantially revised and expanded the content for the second edition (2017), and Andy Loza contributed content and suggestions. Jack Stefferud of Natural Lands, Andrew DuMoulin and Peggy Chiu of The Trust for Public Land, and Mike Frank reviewed drafts and made suggestions to improve clarity and accuracy.

Dulcie Flaharty prepared the first edition (2009), and Tom Gilbert contributed content. Significant portions of the text were adapted from Public Finance for Open Space: A Guide for Pennsylvania’s Municipalities (Heritage Conservancy, 2003).

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A conservation easement reduces the market value of the land because the owner gives up the potential for full development. When an easement is donated—in full or in part—the reduction in market value may allow the landowner to claim a charitable deduction for federal income tax purposes. The donation may also help the owner reduce his or her estate taxes, since the eased land is valued at less than the full fair market value. (These tax benefits are only available to the original easement donor, not subsequent owners of a property under easement.)

The following examples show several ways in which conservation easements might confer tax benefits while helping landowners achieve their conservation goals.

Please be advised that Natural Lands does not offer legal or financial consultation. The tax information in these examples is for illustrative purposes only. Please speak to your tax advisor before engaging in any conservation transaction.

Dianna Germany was among the first group of buyers to purchase a lot at Bryn Coed with a conservation easement in place. She and her young family are part of a unique 1,505-acre conservation community that also includes our 520-acre Bryn Coed Preserve.
donating an easement

When landowners donate an easement, they may be eligible for a charitable deduction equal to the amount of the reduction in the land’s value. A qualified appraiser determines the amount of the reduction.

**example:** The owners of a 50-acre, unprotected property worth $500,000 decide to donate a conservation easement to Natural Lands. A qualified appraiser determines that the land’s fair market value, once the potential for development is removed, is $200,000. The owners would then be entitled to a federal income tax deduction of $300,000 (the value of the easement) resulting in a potential savings of approximately $105,000 (assuming a 35% tax rate). The land may also be assessed at the lower value for property and estate taxes.

*Note that according to the current law, landowners may claim up to 50% of their adjusted gross income (AGI) each year for donating an easement, and this deduction can be carried forward for 15 years. Qualifying farmers can deduct up to 100% of their income.*

selling an easement

A landowner may sell an easement to a qualified organization or government agency. If the easement is sold for its full value, it may create federal income tax obligations for either capital gains or ordinary income tax. Nevertheless, the owner’s estate and property taxes may still be reduced because the market value of the property has been decreased by the conservation easement.

**example:** A family owns a 100-acre property with an easement value of $500,000. A local watershed group wishes to protect this land so it offers to purchase an easement on the property. The landowner sells the easement at below fair market value (or bargain sale) for $200,000. In this case, the donated portion (the difference between full value and the sale price or $300,000) may qualify for a tax deduction and the landowner is responsible to pay taxes on the income ($200,000) received for the easement. The tax savings will vary depending on how long the sellers have owned the property and how much they paid for it.

*These transactions can become highly complex, and require consultation with a tax professional.*
donating an easement via your will or living trust

An easement may be donated to either a qualified conservation organization or government agency by will or living trust. Such a bequest would generate a charitable deduction for the estate of the person making the bequest and it could also reduce the value of the estate so that it could be under the threshold that is subject to tax. This threshold is subject to estate tax laws that change from year to year. It is important to speak to your tax advisor to find out how this tax and a conservation easement might impact your financial planning.

example: A widow wants to ensure that the 50-acre farm she shared with her husband remains open space. None of her children want to move back to the land, so she decides to donate, via her will, an easement to her township’s open space program. The land’s fair market value upon her death is $500,000. The easement reduces the value of the property to $200,000. Her estate receives a charitable deduction of $300,000 (the easement value), which may result in significant tax savings, depending on the total value of the estate.

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>conservation technique</th>
<th>retain ownership?</th>
<th>live on and?</th>
<th>tax benefit*</th>
<th>income?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>donate an easement</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Yes (charitable income tax deduction; possible estate and property tax reduction)</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sell an easement (at full value)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>No charitable income tax deduction; possible estate and property tax reductions</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sell an easement (bargain sale)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Yes (charitable income tax deduction on the difference between full value and sale price; possible estate and property tax reductions)</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>donate an easement via bequest</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>Yes (possible estate tax reduction)</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Tax benefits accrue in most cases; however, your personal financial situation will determine how much, if any, reduction you ultimately receive. Natural Lands is not a legal or tax advisor; it is essential that you consult your personal advisors.
monitoring easements and the costs of recording easements

Once a qualified organization holds the conversation easement, it is obligated to monitor the land on a regular basis to ensure that the easement is being upheld and to enforce it if it is violated. When picking a recipient organization, it is important that you choose a group that has the capacity and skills to fulfill this obligation now and in the future. The ongoing cost of monitoring is frequently covered by establishing a modest stewardship fund.

There are other costs involved in creating and implementing a conservation easement. A baseline study (inventory of natural and manmade features) of the conservation easement area must be prepared (this is usually done by the conservation organization). Then, the conservation organization must write and record the easement. Most organizations will ask to be reimbursed for these expenses. Of course, you will also incur expenses when you consult your attorney, financial advisor, and an independent appraiser.

In a combined conservation easement and fee acquisition in Millville, NJ, 14 acres of tidal marsh were permanently protected and another 51 acres were added to our Harold N. Peek Preserve.

“We wanted to do something so our farm would not get swallowed up by development someday,” said Ken and Janet Engelman. “Our eight grandkids are the seventh generation to live here.”

Cumberland County, PA, though still relatively rural, is the fastest-growing county in the state. Seeing the signs of development, Silver Spring Township has begun a proactive and comprehensive approach to protecting the community’s green space, including working with Natural Lands to secure conservation easements on key private properties.

If you are interested in preserving your land, please contact Erin McCormick, our Conservation Easement Program Director. She will be happy to discuss your conservation goals and work with you to find a solution that meets them.

610-353-5587 x 255
emccormick@natlands.org.
Appendix I– Open Space Parcel Questionnaire

1. How big is the parcel being considered for conservation? ____________________________

2. Is the property available for sale and how willing is the landowners to sell or agree to an easement? YES  NO ____________________________________________________________

3. Does conservation of this parcel protect Exceptional Value or High Quality streams, their headwaters or floodplains? YES  NO ____________________________________________________________

4. Does conservation of this parcel fill a geographical gap in the parks and recreation system, as shown on the Parks and Walkability map? YES  NO ____________________________________________________________

5. Is the parcel a suitable site for a community park based on its size, location, and features? YES  NO ____________________________________________________________

6. Does conservation of this parcel expand an existing park or improve access to an existing park? YES  NO ____________________________________________________________

7. Does conservation of this parcel advance the Township wide trail system? YES  NO ____________________________________________________________

8. Is the parcel adjacent to a currently protected parcel, a school or a parcel owned by the school district? YES  NO ____________________________________________________________

9. Is the parcel environmentally ready to host recreational activities? Has it been impacted negatively by past uses? Is it included in Appendix A, Sensitive Sites? YES  NO ____________________________________________________________

10. Does the parcel contain natural resources such as woodlands, specimen trees, wetlands or steep slopes?

   Woodlands   Wetlands   Specimen Trees   Steep Slopes   Floodplains
11. Does the parcel contain, or have the potential to contain a significant, threatened, rare or endangered plant or animal species as indicated by a PNDI review?

Yes  No  ________________________________________________________________

12. Does the parcel contain a Class I, II or III historical resource? Or another culturally significant resource?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class I</th>
<th>Class II</th>
<th>Class III</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

_____________________________________________________________________________

13. Does conservation of the parcel protect agriculture or encourage its continuation?

YES  NO  ________________________________________________________________

14. Is the parcel under threat of development? If it were to be developed, how many units would it support? Would the current zoning require some of the parcel to be conserved as open space?

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

15. Is the parcel at or near a gateway to the Township? Does it hold an important scenic view?

YES  NO  ________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
**TRAIL ALIGNMENT EVALUATION - BRYN ERIN**

**PREFERRED ALIGNMENT AND PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS**

**Kelmar Avenue Connection**
- Provide an 8' wide asphalt trail between the playground at Kelmar Avenue and the Chester Valley Trail.

**99 Church Road Connection**
- A crushed stone path will be installed by others as part of the 99 Church Road land development plan. The path will connect to an internal sidewalk network within the development, including a pedestrian crossing of Church Road.

**Legend**
- **Facility Type**
  - **Existing**
    - Trail - Natural
    - Trail - Stone
    - Trail - Asphalt
    - Sidewalk
    - Shoulder
  - **Proposed**
    - Key Crossing
    - Municipal Park

---

**Sources:**
- Existing Trails
- Parks - Chesco GIS
SIDLEY ROAD TO CVT
PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS

Mill Lane (Conestoga to Chester Valley Trail)
Provide an 8" wide asphalt trail on the west side of Mill Lane with a minimum 5" wide grass buffer between the roadway and the trail. At the Conestoga Road intersection, install pedestrian countdown signals and high visibility crosswalks.

Moores Road (Ashlawn to Sidley) & Sidley Road (Moores to Lapp) & Mill Lane (Lapp to approach to bridge over US 202)
Provide an 8" wide asphalt trail with a minimum 5" wide grass buffer from the roadway. The trail will be located on the south side of Moores Road between Sidley Road and Ashlawn Road and the west side of Sidley Road/Mill Lane between Moores Road and the approach to the bridge over US 202. The paved trail will replace an existing mulch trail in some locations, but the specific alignment will be determined in preliminary engineering and through coordination with the adjacent property owner and tenant. Care will be taken to minimize significant regrading and preserve or provide a vegetative buffer between the trail and nearby buildings. Stripe high visibility crosswalks at key crossings at the intersections of Moores/Ashlawn and Moores/Sidley.

Mill Lane (approach to bridge over US 202 to Conestoga)
Utilize and widen the existing shoulder to provide a consistent 5” paved shoulder with a 2” wide striped buffer along the west side of Mill Lane. This may involve restricting the travel lanes to maximize the width of the shoulder on the west side of Mill Lane. Provide additional signage and pavement markings to designate the shoulder for use by pedestrians/bicyclists. Utilize the existing sidewalk on the Mill Lane Bridge over US 202.

Legend
Facility Type
Existing Proposed
- Trail - Natural
- Trail - Stone
- Trail - Asphalt
- Sidewalk
- Shoulder
- Key Crossing
- Municipal Park
- Township Owned Properties

Source:
Existing Trails, Parks - Checo GIS

McMAHON
TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERS & PLANNERS
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<tr>
<th>Program – Administering Agency</th>
<th>Program Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chester County Open Space—Municipal Grants Program – Chester County Open Space Preservation</td>
<td>– Annual competitive grant program for County funds – 50% match; $100,000 to $250,000 for development grants; $500,000 for acquisition grants – 3 year timeframe to complete the grant funded activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Conservation Partnerships Program (C2P2) – Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR)</td>
<td>– Annual competitive grant program for park, recreation, and trail projects – Various federal and state funds – 20% to 50% match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greenways, Trails and Recreation Program (GTRP) – Commonwealth Financing Authority (CFA) with DCED &amp; DCNR</td>
<td>– Annual competitive grant program for state funds (Act 13) – 15% match; $250,000 maximum – 2 - 3 year timeframe to complete the grant funded activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TA Set-Aside) – PennDOT – Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC)</td>
<td>– Federal transportation funds – Match requires funding all pre-construction activities – $50,000 minimum and $1 million maximum – 2 year timeframe to complete design, right-of-way, and utility clearance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regional Trails Program – DVRPC</td>
<td>– Competitive program to complete the Circuit – Can be used for planning, feasibility, design, or construction – 20% match – $500,000 maximum for planning, design or engineering; $1,000,000 maximum for construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PECO Green Region Program – Natural Lands</td>
<td>– Annual competitive grant program for private funds – 50% match; $10,000 maximum – 18 month timeframe to expend grant funds</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) – DVRPC</td>
<td>– Federal transportation funds – Match requires funding all pre-construction activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFA/DCED – Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF) – CFA with DCED</td>
<td>– Annual competitive grant program for state funds (Act 89) – 30% match; $100,000 minimum; $3 million maximum – 2 – 3 year timeframe to complete the grant funded activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PennDOT – Multimodal Transportation Fund (MTF) – PennDOT</td>
<td>– Annual competitive grant program for state funds (Act 89) – 30% match (based on grant award); $100,000 minimum; $3 million maximum – 3 year timeframe to complete the grant funded activities</td>
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Disclaimer: This map is not a survey. The information imparted with this map is meant to assist Natural Lands Trust, Inc., describe the placement of certain retained, reserved, or excluded rights and to calculate acreage figures. Property boundaries, while approximate, were established using the best available information, which may have included surveys, tax maps, field mapping using G.P.S., and/or orthophotos. Natural Lands Trust, Inc., makes no representation as to the accuracy of said property lines (or any other lines), and no liability is assumed by reason of reliance thereon. Use of this map for other than its intended purpose requires the written consent of Natural Lands Trust, Inc.
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Conestoga Formation
Felsic and intermediate gneiss
Ledger Formation
Chickies Formation
Elbrook Formation
Octoraro Formation
Vintage Formation
Antietam and Harpers Formations, undivided
Bryn Mawr Formation
Conestoga Formation
Elbrook Formation
Felsic and intermediate gneiss
Kinzers Formation
Ledger Formation
Octoraro Formation
Vintage Formation

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Topography/Hydrology

EAST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP
Chester County, PA

- Municipal Boundaries
- Contours (5 ft)
- Waterways
- Wetlands
- Hydric Soils
- 100-Year Floodplain
- Watershed Boundaries

Watershed Percent of Township:
- Valley Creek: 85%
- East Branch Brandywine Creek: 7%
- Ridley Creek: 8%

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Compiled By: MEB 01/14/19

1. Parcel boundaries and waterways from Chester County.
2. Contours from DVRPC.
3. Floodplains from FEMA.
4. Wetlands from the National Wetlands Inventory.
5. Hydric soils from USDA-NRCS.

1031 Palmers Mill Road, Media, PA 19063
610-388-5087 | natlands.org
Disclaimer: This map is not a survey. The information imparted with this map is meant to assist Natural Lands Trust, Inc., describe the placement of certain retained, reserved, or excluded rights and to calculate acreage figures. Property boundaries, while approximate, were established using the best available information, which may have included: surveys, tax maps, field mapping using G.P.S., and/or orthophotos. Natural Lands Trust, Inc., makes no representation as to the accuracy of said property lines (or any other lines), and no liability is assumed by reason of reliance hereon. Use of this map for other than its intended purpose requires the written consent of Natural Lands Trust, Inc.
Walkability has been studied within 1/2 mile of each park, considering barriers such as highways, railroads, and other features.

**Parks and Walkability**

**EAST WHITELAND TOWNSHIP**

Chester County, PA

- Municipal Boundaries
- Parcel Boundary
- Public and Protected Lands
- Railroads
- Waterways
- Areas Walkable to Parks
  - Parks within Township
  - Parks outside Township

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1. Parcel boundaries, roadways, and waterways from Chester County.
2. Existing protected lands from Chester County, and the National Conservation Easement Database (NCED).
3. Primary Conservation Lands are 100-year floodplains, wetlands, and slopes > 25%.

Compiled By: MEB 08/08/19

Disclaimer: This map is not a survey. The information imparted with this map is meant to assist Natural Lands Trust, Inc., describe the placement of certain retained, reserved, or excluded rights and to calculate acreage figures. Property boundaries, while approximate, were established using the best available information, which may have included surveys, tax maps, field mapping using G.P.S., and/or orthophotos. Natural Lands Trust, Inc., makes no representation as to the accuracy of said property lines (or any other lines), and no liability is assumed by reason of reliance hereon. Use of this map for other than its intended purpose requires the written consent of Natural Lands Trust, Inc.

Natural Lands
1031 Palmers Mill Road, Media, PA 19063
610-553-5387 | natlands.org
Multimodal Connections

Legend

- **Municipal Parks**
- **Existing**
- **Recommended**
- **Multi-use Trail 10'-12’**
- **Multi-use Trail 8'-10’**
- **Sidewalk**
- **Path**
- **Natural Path**
- **Neighborhood Greenway**
- **Striped Shoulder**
- **Bike Lane**
- **Roadway Widening**
- **Construction Funded**
- **Design Funded**